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IRAN LOSES ITS 'IRON' GRIP

Iran's hard-line supreme leader is dead | Ayatollah Ali Khamenei embodied fearsome anti-Western rule

Who was Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

Ali Hosseini Khamenei

Supreme Leader of Iran (1989-2026)

Born: 19 April 1939, Mashhad, Iran

Died: 28 February 2026 (age 86)

(In US-Israel strikes on Tehran)

KEY ROLES

■ Supreme Leader of Iran, commander-in-chief of Armed forces

■ Oversaw the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)

■ Controlled judiciary, state media, and foreign policy

EARLY LIFE & RISE

■ Studied Islamic theology in Mashhad and Qom

■ Follower of revolutionary cleric

■ Arrested multiple times under the Shah

■ President of Iran (1981-1989)

NUCLEAR & FOREIGN POLICY

■ Oversaw Iranian nuclear programme

■ Negotiated 2015 nuclear deal; opposed US withdrawal in 2018

■ Advocated strategic autonomy against Western pressure

REGIONAL INFLUENCE

■ Expanded Iran's reach in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Yemen

■ Supported Bashar al-Assad and anti-Israel groups

■ Maintained hostile stance toward Israel

LEADERSHIP STYLE

■ Firm, cautious, heavily reliant on IRGC and clerical networks

■ Viewed as defender of sovereignty by supporters

■ Criticized for restricting political freedoms

Death: Killed in a massive US-Israel air attack on Iran on Feb 28



TEHRAN

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was killed on the first day of massive US and Israeli air strikes on Iran's Tehran on Saturday, ending 36 years of absolute rule over the Islamic Republic.

The 86-year-old ruler of the past three decades - one of the longest in the world - was killed at his compound in downtown Tehran, confirmed on Iranian state TV. Trump said earlier that Khamenei and other Iranian officials "couldn't escape US intelligence and the advanced tracking systems".

The operation—codenamed 'Roaring Lion' by the Israeli military and 'Operation Epic Fury' by the US Pentagon—began at dawn. The strikes targeted locations in Tehran, Isfahan, Qom, Karaj, and Kermanshah.

A 40-day mourning period for the longtime Iranian leader has been announced.

Khamenei took the helm in Iran in 1989, following the death of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the charismatic leader who had spearheaded the Islamic revolution a decade earlier.

While Khomeini was the ideological force behind the



revolution that ended the rule of the Pahlavi monarchy, it was Khamenei who shaped the military and paramilitary apparatus that forms both Iran's defence against its enemies and provides it with influence well beyond its borders.

Before becoming the supreme leader, he had led Iran as president through a bloody war with Iraq in the 1980s. The grinding conflict, coupled with a sense of isolation among many Iranians as Western countries backed Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, deepened Khamenei's distrust of the West, generally, and the US, in particular, analysts say.

Air India will operate its flights to North America and Europe using alternative routes over available airspaces in the Middle East and cancel six flights to various European cities on March 2.

The early years

Born in 1939 in the holy Shia city of Mashhad in northeast Iran, Khamenei was the son of a renowned Muslim leader and ethnic Azerbaijani from neighbouring Iraq. The family first settled in Tabriz in northwestern Iran before moving to Mashhad, a place favoured by

religious pilgrims, where Khamenei's father led an Azerbaijani mosque.

Khamenei described his mother, Khadijeh Mirdamadi, as an avid Quran and book reader who instilled in her son a love of literature and poetry, and later supported her son as he joined the movement against the Pahlavi dynasty's rule.

He started his studies at age four, learning the Quran, and completed his primary education at the first Islamic school in Mashhad. He did not finish high school, instead attending theology schools and learning from Islamic scholars of the time.

How CIA intel led to fatal strike on Khamenei

Washington: Crucial tip off from the US Central Intelligence Agency, indicating that Khamenei would attend a meeting of senior Iranian officials, helped shape the joint US-Israeli strikes. He was killed in strikes on Tehran after the US-Israel vowed to pursue regime change in the Islamic republic. The CIA had been tracking Khamenei for months, building detailed assessments of his movements and patterns. They launched the attack shortly after the CIA learned about the meeting of top Iranian political and security officials on Saturday morning.



After Khamenei's death, Iran flies red flag over mosques

In a symbolic gesture signalling retaliation, a red "flag of revenge" was raised over the dome of the Jamkaran Mosque, which is a site of religious significance for Iran. Following the death of their Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the flag was raised to symbolise justice and revenge. According to several media reports, the red flag atop the mosque in the city of Qom reflects mounting anger and vengeance among supporters of the leader as tensions in the Middle East escalate.



Massive protests erupt in parts of India over Khamenei's death

Srinagar/Lucknow: From Kashmir to Karnataka, Shia mourners took to the streets in various parts of India on Sunday to express outrage and grief over the death of Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in a US-Israel strike. It triggered a wave of protests and mourning across the world, including India. Kashmir, which has about 15 lakh Shias, witnessed major protests at Lal Chowk, Saida Kadal, Budgam, Bandipora, Anantnag and Pulwama. The protesters were seen beating their chests as they shouted anti-US and anti-Israel slogans.



Khomeini's India connection

Kintoor was the birthplace of Syed Ahmed Musavi, Khomeini's grandfather. Born in the early 19th century, Musavi left India for Najaf in Iraq — a prominent centre of Shia learning — before eventually settling in the Iranian city of Khomeini in 1834. It was there that the family laid down roots that would, a century later, culminate in political and religious power at the highest level.

Oil tanker with 15 Indians on board hit off Oman coast

OMAN: A Palau-flagged oil tanker under US sanctions was hit on Sunday off Oman's Musandam peninsula, injuring four people, the country's maritime security centre said. The 20-person crew of the Skylight tanker, including 15 Indian and five Iranian citizens, was evacuated after the attack, which occurred about five nautical miles north of Musandam's Khasab Port, on the strategic Strait of Hormuz, the Oman Maritime Security Centre said in an X post. It reported injuries of varying severity to four of the crew. Skylight's registered owner is Sea Force Inc., and it is managed by Red Sea Ship Management LLC, according to LSEG data.



Iran targets US assets in Gulf

DUBAI

More explosions have been heard across the Gulf states, with at least three people killed in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as Iran carries out attacks in retaliation for attacks by the United States and Israel that killed its Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and other top officials. The explosions were heard for a second day on Sunday morning in Dubai, the UAE; Bahrain's capital, Manama; and Qatar's capital, Doha, raising fears of a wider conflict in a region long seen as a haven of peace and security in an otherwise turbulent Middle East.

The fresh explosions came after a day of deadly



Iranian strikes in the Emirati capital Abu Dhabi, which saw military bases and infrastructure, including airports, hit across the Gulf — except for mediator Oman.

At Abu Dhabi's airport, at least one person was killed and seven wounded while Dubai airport, the world's

busiest for international traffic and Kuwait's airport were also hit.

It may be recalled that Iran launched retaliatory strikes on the neighbouring Gulf states in response to the US and Israeli strikes on the Islamic Republic. Iran has said it would target US bases in the region. It has hit a range of other targets. The attacks raised fears of a wider conflict and rattled a region long seen as a haven of peace and security in the turbulent Middle East.

Across the UAE, Iran fired 137 missiles and 209 drones at the territory, the country's defence ministry said, with fires and smoke reaching landmarks The Palm and Burj Al Arab.

Explosion rocks Iran's capital

Tehran: An enormous explosion rocked Iran's capital on Sunday as the Israeli military said it was targeting the heart of the city. Earlier, Iran fired missiles at targets in Israel and Gulf Arab states after vowing massive retaliation for the killing of Khamenei by the US and Israel. The blast in Tehran sent a huge plume of smoke into the sky and shook the ground. It wasn't immediately clear what the target was. The blast appeared centered in a neighborhood that is home to the country's police HQ.

Putin terms Khamenei's killing a 'cynical murder'

MOSCO: Russian President Vladimir Putin has called the targeted killing of Iran's supreme leader a "cynical murder". As per the Russian state media agency 'TASS', Putin described Khamenei's death as a murder that violated "all norms of human morality and international law." He said Khamenei would be remembered in Russia as an "outstanding statesman." Moscow and Tehran have long been key allies, with Iran providing Russia with military support including drones and ballistic missiles, and helping Moscow build a drone-manufacturing facility, amid its war on Ukraine. Roughly a week before the attack, Iran had inked an arms deal with Russia to buy thousands of shoulder-fired missiles, the Financial Times had reported. According to the deal, worth \$589 million and signed in Moscow, Russia has to hand over 500 launch units and 2,500 missiles in the next three years, the report had said, citing leaked documents.



'Mizoram tops cancer incidence, mortality in India'

AIZAWL

Mizoram has the highest cancer incidence and mortality rates in India, with Aizawl district reporting an age-adjusted incidence rate of 269.4 per one lakh men, health officials said on Sunday.

A senior Health and Family Welfare Department official said stomach and lung cancers are the leading causes of cancer in the state, largely driven by high tobacco and betel nut consumption, dietary habits, and genetic factors.

The official said the Mizoram government signed an Externally Aided Project loan agreement with the Asian

Development Bank on January 23, for a project titled "Supporting Public Health Care System Strengthening to Achieve Universal Healthcare for Mizoram", popularly known as the Mizoram Universal Healthcare Scheme (MUHCS).

He added that the World Bank-funded Mizoram Health Systems Strengthening Project has been successfully implemented and is expected to close by March 2026.

Under this project, the Mizoram State Super Speciality Cancer and Research Centre is being set up in Aizawl under the Health and Family Welfare Department.



Addressing a function on Saturday in Aizawl, State Health and Family Welfare Minister Lalrinpuoi expressed concern that Mizoram has one of the highest cancer incidence rates in India relative to its population.

She noted that even the Director of Tata Memorial Hospital in Mumbai, where many Mizo cancer patients seek

treatment, had remarked on the unusually high number of cancer cases among Mizos.

The Minister said that according to experts, the high consumption of tobacco products, unhealthy dietary habits including excessive intake of smoked meat, pork fat and oils, and lifestyle factors are major contributors to the state's cancer burden.

She stated that among women in India, breast cancer is the most common, followed by cervical cancer. Highlighting that 99.7 per cent of cervical cancer cases are caused by Human Papillomavirus (HPV), she described the free vaccination programme as a

welcome and crucial preventive measure and urged all eligible 14-year-old girls to avail themselves of the vaccine.

The Minister also appreciated the dedication and hard work of healthcare workers from the Directorate level down to Sub-Centres.

Mizoram Chief Secretary Khilli Ram Meena, speaking at the same function, said that one out of every five cervical cancer patients globally is from India.

He termed the free vaccination drive for adolescent girls, future mothers of the nation, as a vital and timely intervention.

17 killed, 18 injured in Nagpur factory blast

MUMBAI/ NAGPUR

At least 17 people were killed and 18 others injured in a devastating explosion that occurred early this morning at SBL Energy Limited - a mining and industrial explosives manufacturing company located in Raulgaon, in Katol near Nagpur.

Nagpur Rural Superintendent of Police Harsh Poddar confirmed the deaths. The injured have been shifted to nearby hospitals as well as Orange City Hospital in Nagpur.

The exact cause of the explosion is yet to be determined. Rescue operations are

ongoing and an investigation has been initiated.

The SBL company in Raulgaon manufactures detonators and other explosive materials used in mining. As workers had reported for duty as usual, a sudden and powerful explosion occurred during the detonator manufacturing process.

The sound of the blast was heard beyond the surrounding area, creating panic among villagers. The explosion was so intense that a part of the concerned unit collapsed. Thick plumes of smoke were seen rising into the sky following the incident.

QUICK READ



Woman attempting suicide with 2 kids rescued

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
Swift response by a Hoysala police team saved a 28-year-old woman and her two children after she allegedly tried to jump in front of a train near Agrahara Layout in Sampige-halli. She later told police she was a victim of domestic violence by her alcoholic husband. Residents heard children crying and looked out of their houses to find the woman seated on the railway track with the two minors. Alarmed, they called the police control room. A Hoysala patrol vehicle rushed to the spot and quickly moved the children away from the tracks and persuaded the woman to step aside.

Maha racket: Min orders to monitor IVF centres in B'luru

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao directed department officials to monitor the functioning of IVF centres in Bengaluru following the recent busting of an alleged egg trafficking racket in Maharashtra. The directive comes after authorities in Badlapur, Maharashtra, uncovered an illegal network involving unethical stimulation, extraction and sale of human eggs. Three women were arrested in connection with the case, and preliminary investigation revealed at least 40 women were allegedly exploited as part of the racket. Rao told media that during the course of investigation, possible links to Bengaluru had been mentioned. If embryos or eggs are being extracted unethically, it amounts to a clear violation of Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Act, 2021. I have instructed officials to keep a strict watch on IVF centres in the city, he said.

Son kills family over sister's inter-caste marriage

BENGALURU

The Tilaknagar police were grappling with a baffling case, a family of three had gone missing. H Bheemara, his wife J Jayalakshmi and their daughter Amrita. Despite intense searches, there was no trace of them.

The person reporting the disappearance, 27-year-old BJ Akshay, appeared deeply worried, lamenting the police's inability to locate his family. Police Inspector Vishwanath K was formulating the next steps when a sudden ringtone pierced the station. It came



from Akshay's trouser pocket. The color drained from his face. Sir, I gave the ring to his sister's mobile, and it's ringing now, said a constable. This startling moment shifted the investigation. Suspecting foul play, police searched Akshay and found three SIM cards, belonging to the supposedly missing family.

Joint Commissioner of Police-East, Ramesh Banoth, explained, Tilaknagar police sensed something was off from the beginning. Akshay made contradictory statements and tried to mislead us on several points. We had been dialing the family's numbers randomly, all switched off.

But on January 30, while Akshay stepped out for tea, he switched on his sister's phone to create the illusion they were in Bengaluru. What seemed like a standard missing-person case quickly turned horrifying.

Investigators revealed that Bheemaraj had sold a property in Harappanahalli, Davanagere, for Rs 1.2 crore. Akshay had spent a portion of the proceeds without Bheemaraj's knowledge.

The crime unfolded over several days. On January 26, Akshay killed his mother in the afternoon, hiding her body in a bedroom. In the evening, he murdered his sister, and that night, he killed his father. He covered the bodies with a bedsheet and traveled to Bengaluru the next morning, leaving his mobile at home while carrying his family's phones.

UNSAFE ROAD CROSSINGS

BLACK & WHITE STRIPS FADE AT CROSSWALKS

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Where do we cross, is a question pedestrian across the city are asking with growing frustration. As new roads and Metro lines take shape, zebra crossings seem to be vanishing. In several busy junctions, the stripes are worn out, encroached upon or missing altogether.

In some spots, patchwork repairs had buried the markings; elsewhere, newly asphalted roads were never repainted. The result: pedestrians are left guessing and often sprinting through moving traffic. The absence of zebra crossings isn't just a pedestrian problem, it puts motorists in a bind too. Bengaluru traf-



fic police mandate that vehicles stop behind the white line before a zebra crossing.

Violations invite fines. However, many motorists say the stop lines and stripes are faded or barely visible, especially after dark, leaving them unsure where to halt.

Banashankari is among the busiest junctions in the city,

where commuters have to frequently switch between Metro and buses. College students and office-goers heading towards central Bengaluru, Uttarahalli, and Outer Ring Road pass through this point daily.

After recent asphaltting, zebra crossings are largely absent, leaving pedestrians confused about where to cross the

road from. At the junction where Bannerghatta Road meets Outer Ring Road, traffic pours in from three directions. Ongoing Namma Metro work has further worsened the congestion. Many describe negotiating this signal as a big task, as speeding two-wheelers and buses pose a clear and present danger to children and elderly pedestrians. Some commuters say it takes more than five minutes to cross this less-than-10-metre stretch.

Even though a skywalk exists here, many elderly people and school students continue to cross the road at undesignated points. With heavy vehicular movement and cars speeding towards Vidhana Soudha and Palace Grounds,

crossing the road poses a huge challenge. A traffic policeman said letters were written to the authorities, but drew no response, adding that traffic police officers often step in to help children and the elderly cross.

At this prime junction with heavy vehicle movement, zebra crossings are hardly visible. Most of the washed-out portion is on the stretch next to the LIC building. Pedestrians attempting to cross, or motorists trying to take U-turns here, often get caught by surveillance cameras due to unclear markings. On Residency Road, near Samsung Opera House, large crowds accessing Brigade Road and Church Street use this junction.

Order on batch-wise drug certificates opposed

Wholesale drug distributors oppose the state government order to obtain batch-wise certificate of analysis

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A recent government order mandating pharmaceutical wholesalers to obtain batch-wise Certificates of Analysis (CoA) for every drug purchase from manufacturers drew strong objections from pharmaceutical distributors in Karnataka. A CoA is an official quality document that confirms a specific drug batch was laboratory-tested and met required safety, purity and specification standards before release or sale.

In the government order, Food Safety and Drug Admin-

istration (FDA) directed that wholesalers must obtain a CoA for every batch of medicines procured, as part of efforts to strengthen quality control and regulatory oversight in the pharmaceutical supply chain.

The order said the decision was taken following maternal deaths in the state last year and the cough syrup fiasco in Madhya Pradesh. However, in a representation submitted by Karnataka Pharma Retailers and Distributors Organization (KPRDO) to the department, pharmacists argued that the directive is impractical and



could disrupt medicine supplies. They demanded withdrawal of the order. At the outset, while procurement of

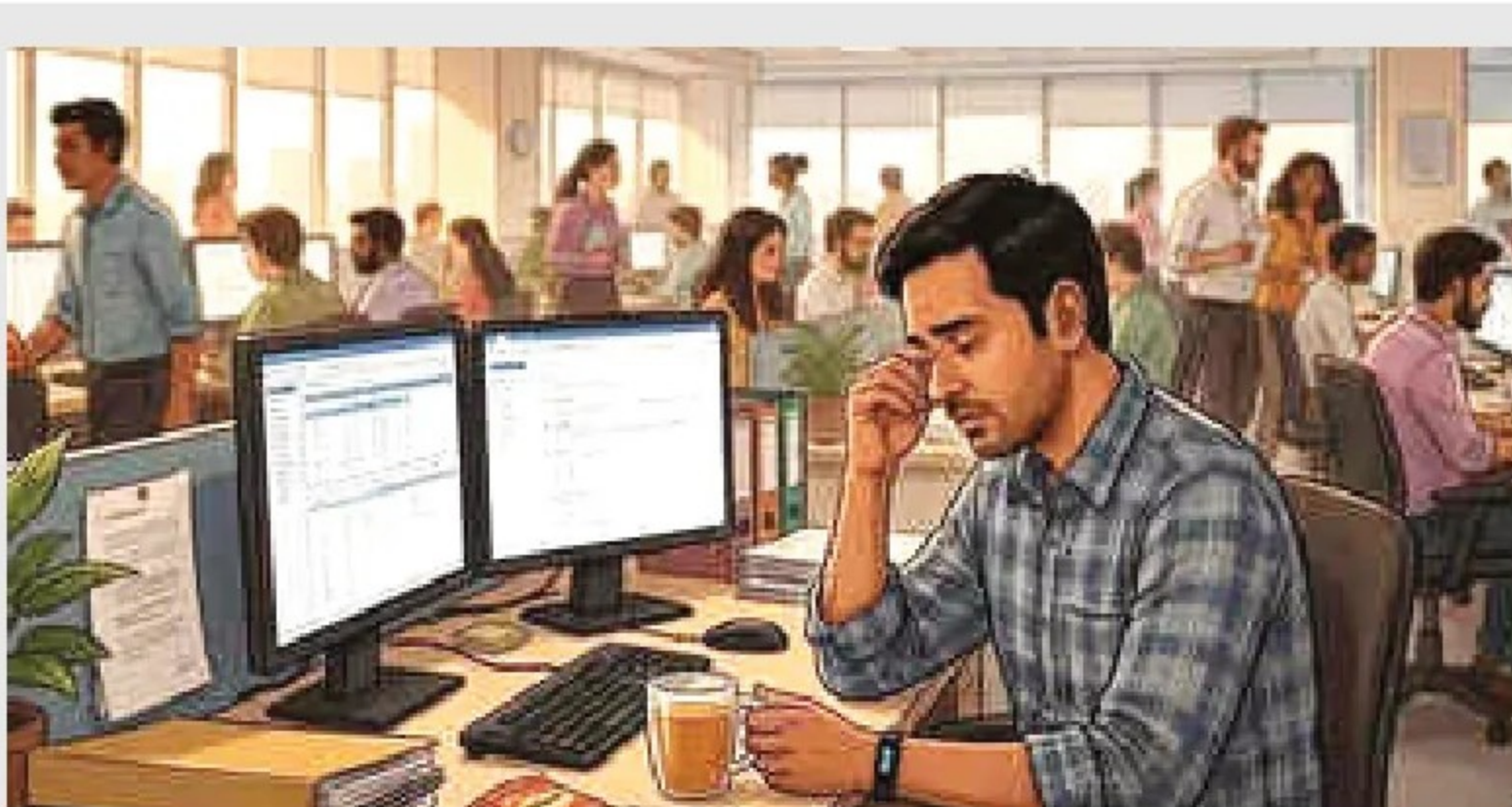
CoA for all purchases may appear theoretically feasible, its practical implementation poses significant challenges.

We request clarification on whether any comprehensive study or data analysis was conducted to assess the magnitude of this requirement. Wholesalers handle thousands of purchase transactions involving multiple batches on a continuous basis. Collecting, verifying and maintaining batch-wise CoAs for every such transaction is an enormous operational burden, said C Jayaram, President, KRDO.

KRDO warned that implementing the requirement only here could disrupt the supply chain, stating that Karnataka manufactures only a fraction

of the drugs consumed within the state, with a substantial portion sourced from other states. If CoA is implemented only in Karnataka, how can medicines be purchased from pharmaceutical companies located in different states, it asked.

Jayaram suggested that, if implemented, such a compliance mechanism should be rolled out uniformly at the national level through a centralised digital portal where manufacturers upload batch-wise CoA details for access by wholesalers and regulators.



AI fears, tough market push up presenteeism

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Seized by fears of Artificial Intelligence-triggered job losses and a rough job market, working professionals are embracing presenteeism. They're showing up at work every single day despite challenges like exhaustion, anxiety, and depression. After a grind of daily stand-ups and odd-hour client calls for months and years, employees become a case study for mental health professionals.

These silent struggles drag on. Until burnout explodes or sickness manifests physically. There has been a rise in presenteeism as many employees continue to function outwardly while struggling internally, often masking their symptoms to meet certain expectations. This pattern is common in high-pressure, performance-driven environments where productivity is valued more than well-being, leading individuals to push through distress instead of pausing and seeking help, said Dr Darshan Yallapa Jotibannad, Consultant Psychiatrist, Sparsh Hospital, Infantry Road.

Neha Cadabam, senior psychologist and executive director at Cadabams Hos-

pitals, broke it down.

The presentation depends on the job. For roles needing creative thinking or strategy, mental health issues definitely take a toll. If it is a monotonous task, it gets done mindlessly. Quality might drop, coffee breaks might increase, or a person might sit in front of a computer without truly investing hours.

Dr BG Girishchandra, Medical Director and Senior Psychiatrist, Maarga Mind Care, said, since there is no visible physical abnormality, mentally ill persons come across as 'okay' and others assume they are functioning normally. But their overall functioning deteriorates, their communication skills, concentration, ability to interact, and judgment get influenced by their state of mind. A person with depression, anxiety or other illnesses has a reduced capacity. Presenteeism is not new, but workplaces have evolved sensitive managers, company-sponsored counselling, and even dedicated mental health leave in some organisations. Yet, according to clinicians, employees still balk at claiming it. If an employee takes a mental health day off and returns the next day.

Be kind to stray dogs, feed them: Sudha Murty

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Philanthropist and Rajya Sabha MP Sudha Murty has appealed to the public to show compassion towards animals, especially street dogs, and encouraged people to feed them regularly.

As part of a podcast hosted by Bengaluru police, Murty spoke about her Golden Retriever, Gopi, and emphasised the idea of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the belief that the world is one family. Not just humans, birds, animals and



plants make a family. Please remember that among animals, the dog is very close to human beings. Dogs require love more than food. They understand you.

When you are angry, happy, they understand, she pointed out. Narrating an incident involving her pet Gopi, whom she affectionately calls her grandson, Sudha Murty said, one day, I was walking on the road, and Gopi, who was coming with someone else on the other side, saw me. Suddenly, he crossed the road and ran towards me. I panicked, thinking a speeding vehicle could hit him. But for Gopi, it was pure love.

Highlighting the emotional bond between humans and animals, she said it is beneficial for children to grow up around pets. However, acknowledging that not everyone can keep a dog at home, she urged people to care for strays in their neighbourhoods. When you cook rice, please add one cup in their name; when you make roti or chapati, make one extra for them.

HM launches 3rd edition of Police Run

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara flagged off the 3rd edition of the 'Police Run' marathon in front of the Vidhana Soudha on Sunday. More than 12,000 people participated enthusiastically in the marathon. It was special as more than 3,000 police officers participated. This time the marathon was organized under

the motto of creating awareness among the people about drug-free Karnataka and prevention of cyber crimes. The marathon was organized in 5 kilometer and 10 kilometer categories.

DG & IGP Dr. Salim, City Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh and many senior police officers participated in the race. Our metro was started from the morning for the

convenience of the public in the backdrop of the marathon. Since the metro service started from 5 am, it was easy for thousands of people to reach Vidhana Soudha.

Speaking to the media after the marathon, Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara clarified, more than 150 Kannadigas, including students, are stranded in Dubai due to the war situation between Iran and Israel.

B'luru pvt bus operators seek more time to comply with safety norms

BENGALURU

Private bus operators in Bengaluru have requested the Transport department for an extension of the February 28 deadline for compliance of safety measures for both regular and the sleeper buses.

About two weeks ago, the Transport department, had set the deadline in light of a series of fatal accidents, involving private sleeper buses.

The directive called for the removal of the partition door behind the driver in all sleeper buses, installation of fire extinguishers of at least 10 kg in all sleeper buses, and display of a design layout drawing clearly indicating emergency exists, the location of

fire extinguishers and roof hatches, in a place easily visible and readable to passengers in all buses, among other safety measures.

However, the tight deadline has led to long queues at bodybuilding workshops in the city, bus operators told DH. "One of the things pointed out in the directive is the removal of luggage carriers. This is something that is taking time, as most of the older buses have it as it was allowed back to them.

Now that all operators are trying to remove them, the workshops are all backed up. They are only accepting two buses from each operator per day," said Ayush Jain, proprietor, Sugama tourists.

Govt to complete Krishna Upper Stage-III soon

Patil inaugurated Almatti water park, highlighting plans to raise the dam, increasing storage and irrigation for Karnataka farmers

VIJAYAPURA

Karnataka's Minister for Large and Medium Industries and Infrastructure Development, M.B. Patil, assured that the State Government is fully committed to completing the third stage of the Krishna Upper Project within the next two to three years. He emphasized that the project will not face any delays and is a top priority for the government.

Speaking at the inauguration of a new water amusement park at Almatti, developed in collaboration with the Water Resources Department and Krishna Bhagya Jala Nigam Limited, Patil highlighted the government's plan to raise the Almatti Dam's height to 524 metres. He said this move would benefit farmers by in-



creasing water availability and irrigation capacity. Once completed, the reservoir's storage will rise from 130 TMC to 233 TMC, making it Karnataka's largest reservoir and ensuring up to 90 per cent of the State's allocated share of Krishna River water reaches farmers.

The minister noted that raising the dam will submerge around 75,000 acres of land

and require relocating 20 villages. He acknowledged the financial and logistical challenges but added that representatives from Vijayapura and Bagalkot districts have strongly urged the Cabinet to prioritise the project. Farmers in these regions have already sacrificed nearly two lakh acres for irrigation and industrial development.

Patil also outlined tourism development plans at Almatti, including a Disney-style park, guest houses, dormitories for rural visitors, cable rides, a planetarium, dash cars, and a musical fountain. He said these projects would be executed in coordination with Minister Shivanand Patil, who presided over the function. Shivanand Patil urged the Union Government to declare Krishna Upper Stage-III a national project, benefiting Karnataka and three other states. He added that proper maintenance of the park could attract up to 10 lakh tourists annually.

The event was attended by several officials and public representatives, marking a step forward in the region's irrigation and tourism development initiatives.

Farmer ends life in Kalaburagi district over alleged debt burden

AFZALPUR

A 58-year-old farmer allegedly died by suicide by hanging in Bandarwad village of Afzalpur taluk in Kalaburagi district. The deceased has been identified as Mallappa Tarapur (58). According to sources, he had gone to his agricultural land at around 8 am on Saturday. After inspecting his fields and observing that the crops had not grown properly this season, he reportedly became distressed. It is learnt that the farmer had availed loans amounting to ₹2 lakh from a bank and ₹5 lakh from private sources. Unable to bear the burden of mounting debts, he is suspected to have taken the extreme step. Mallappa is survived by two sons, three daughters, and a large number of relatives. A case has been registered at Deval Ganagapur Police Station, and further investigation is under way.

He said caste still determines wealth, power, and status in India, criticizing communists for ignoring caste issues in class struggle

Unite to end casteism, says Manasaiah

SINDHANUR

Abolition of caste must become the main goal of both in Ambedkar supporters and Marxists, said R. Manasaiah, Politburo member of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Red Star, at a district-level seminar.

Speaking on the topic "Challenges of Marxist-Ambedkarist Unity for Abolition of Caste," he said caste continues to decide a person's wealth, power and social status in India. He pointed out that Indian society is different from European society, as caste and class are deeply connected here. Ignoring caste issues and assuming they will disappear after a class revolution is a serious weakness of the communist movement, he added.

Manasaiah said most upper castes own property and hold power, while the majority of Dalits and weaker sections



remain landless and socially oppressed. He stressed that class struggle cannot succeed in India without a clear programme to eradicate caste discrimination.

He clarified that Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was not against communism but opposed what he described as rigid and mechanical interpretations of Marxism. Past mistakes must be corrected through united action of workers and oppressed communities, he said.

Other speakers also addressed the gathering. CPI leader and senior journalist D.H. Kambali called for a strong united struggle against fascist tendencies. Lecturer Narayan Belgurki highlighted the role of communists in various farmers' and workers' movements. The seminar was presided over by Kandegala Srinivas, and several leaders, activists and members of different progressive organisations were present.



Panel probes Bagalkot riots, blames lapses

BAGALKOT

A fact-finding committee visited the site of the recent unrest in Bagalkot, conducting an on-the-spot inspection to collect detailed information about the disturbances. The panel stated that it will submit a comprehensive report to the Chief Minister, highlighting the causes and circumstances of the incident.

The committee noted allegations that communal tensions may have been deliberately fueled ahead of the upcoming by-election. Members observed certain developments that suggested attempts to disturb social harmony for political purposes.

The team included Ramakrishna from Bengaluru Janashakti, Basavaraj Sulibhavi from May Sahitya, Dharwad, Muttu Biliyele, Prof. Kashinath Ambalagi, Dr. Meenakshi Bali, K. Neela, Mehraj Patel, J.S. Patil, and Prabhugouda from the Human Fraternity Forum. They interacted with local residents to gather firsthand accounts of the events.

According to locals, a tense atmosphere prevailed near the Panka Mosque for about 40 minutes, though police claimed the disturbance lasted 20 minutes. Residents alleged that provocative songs and dancing took place in front of the mosque. Police officials

The committee noted allegations that communal tensions were intentionally incited before the by-election, observing developments suggesting efforts to disrupt social harmony for political gain

confirmed that several individuals have been arrested after reviewing CCTV footage.

Further incidents included the burning of a vegetable pushcart at night and youths reportedly pelting stones while attempting to enforce a shop closure. The committee criticized the police and district administration for not preventing the escalation and for failing to act promptly against abusive or provocative behavior.

Committee members stressed that political motives linked to the by-election had contributed to the vitiated atmosphere. Despite requests to convene a peace meeting, the administration reportedly did not respond adequately.

The panel demanded a thorough investigation, strict legal action against those responsible, and the appointment of efficient officials to maintain communal harmony. The report will be submitted soon to the Chief Minister and Home Minister for necessary action.

Shivagiri Temple to Hold Special Lunar Eclipse Rituals

VIJAYAPURA

Devotees in Vijayapura are preparing for special religious rituals at Shivagiri Temple on March 3 to mark the lunar eclipse. Temple authorities have announced a series of spiritual programmes, including japa (chanting) and tapa (penance), to be performed during the eclipse.

The lunar eclipse is set to begin at 3:23 pm and end at 6:47 pm, with the eclipsed moon visible for only about 13 minutes after sunset at 6:28 pm, as moonrise occurs at 6:34 pm. Though it will be a partial eclipse (Khandagraasa) in India, temple officials emphasized that traditional puja, abhisheka, and other post-eclipse rituals will be conducted meticulously. Authorities advised devotees to observe the Vedha period, starting nine hours before the eclipse, with fasting and spiritual discipline for healthy individuals. Pregnant women, children, the elderly, and those unwell may have food until 2:32 pm, while medicines or light meals can be taken before 5:46 pm if necessary. Temple authorities appealed to the public to actively participate in the spiritually significant programmes and seek the blessings of Lord Shiva. They stressed that these observances, rooted in tradition, are important for purification and spiritual growth. Devotees are expected to witness and participate in the rituals, making the lunar eclipse a memorable and sacred experience at the Shivagiri Temple.



Software engineer from Bagalkot stuck in Dubai amid war tensions

BAGALKOT

A software engineer from Karnataka's Bagalkot district has been stranded in Dubai following the outbreak of tensions linked to the Iran-Israel-America conflict, leading to the cancellation of several international flights.

Girish Kerura, a native of Bilagi town in Bagalkot district, was travelling from Bengaluru to Paris via Dubai on official company work when flights were suspended due to the escalating war situation. As a result, he remains stuck in Dubai, causing anxiety among his family members back home. According to family sources, Girish is currently safe and has informed them about his well-being through a video call. However,



uncertainty over the resumption of flights has left the family worried.

His brother, Srishaila Kerura, has appealed to the Government of India to take necessary steps to ensure Girish's safe return to India at the earliest.

Srishaila Kerura (Brother of Girish Kerura stranded in Dubai)

"My brother had travelled to Paris for company work via Dubai. Due to the war situation, flights have been cancelled and he is stuck there. Though he has told us that he is safe, we are worried about the situation. We request the Indian government to help him return home as soon as possible."

Middle East Crisis: 24x7 Helpline for Vijayapura District Passengers

VIJAYAPURA

Due to the prevailing instability in certain Middle Eastern countries, international flight services have been disrupted. In view of this situation, the Vijayapura district administration has issued important information and helpline numbers to assist the public.

Airspace Restrictions: The airspace of 11 countries, including Iran, Israel, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia, has been closed until March 2.

As a result of this unexpected disruption, several passengers from Karnataka have been stranded in United Arab Emirates (Dubai) and other Middle Eastern nations.

Steps Taken by the Administration

As per the directions of the Hon'ble Chief Minister and the Revenue Minister, the State and District Emergency Operation Centres are functioning round the clock (24x7).

The district administration is closely monitoring updates and advisories issued by the Ministry of External Affairs and Indian Embassies in the respective countries.

HELPLINE NUMBERS:
Vijayapura District Emergency Operation Centre:
08352-221261,
08352-222101,
Toll-Free: 1077,
Mobile: 7019682740
State Emergency Operation Centre:
080-22340676
080-22253707
Toll-Free: 1070

Residents of Vijayapura district or their relatives may contact the above numbers for information and assistance.

Important Advisory to the Public:

Karnataka residents currently in Middle Eastern countries are advised to strictly follow the safety guidelines issued by the respective local governments.

Those facing difficulties should contact the helpline of the concerned Indian Embassy or register on the 'Sarthi Sahayata' portal for assistance.

In case of visa-related issues, individuals are advised to approach the nearest FRRO office.

Vijayapura Deputy Commissioner Dr. Anand K stated in the press release that the administration is committed to providing all necessary assistance to stranded passengers.

Untouchability alleged at soldier's funeral: Shops, Hotels Closed



BAGALKOT

In a shocking incident highlighting the persistence of caste-based discrimination, alleged untouchability was reported during the funeral of a former soldier in Chinnapur village of Ilkal taluk in Bagalkot district.

Hanumanthappa Harijan (55), a retired Army personnel who had served the nation for 20 years, passed away due to illness. He belonged to the Dalit community. It is alleged that ahead of his funeral, some members of the upper caste in the village closed shops and hotels anticipating that relatives arriving for the last rites might visit these establishments.

Tension escalated when relatives who had consumed juice at a local shop were reportedly refused cash payment. The shopkeeper allegedly stated that since a Dalit person had died, they would not touch money given by Dalits and insisted on online payment instead. The incident sparked outrage among

the family members.

The relatives dialed 112 and informed the police about the incident. Police personnel rushed to the spot and conducted an inquiry. Subsequently, Tahsildar Amaresh Pammur, officials from the police department, and the Social Welfare Department held a peace meeting with leaders of various communities in the village. Following official warnings, the shops were reopened.

According to police sources, another round of peace talks has been scheduled for March 2.

Though untouchability is prohibited by law, the incident has raised serious concerns about the continued existence of caste-based discrimination in rural areas. The alleged humiliation during the funeral of a soldier who had served the country has drawn widespread criticism and highlighted the need for stronger social awareness and enforcement of anti-discrimination laws.

Protest in Bidar condemns U.S. attack on Iran

BIDAR

Members of the Irani community in Bidar staged a protest condemning the recent United States attack on Iran. Children, women and several community members participated, expressing strong opposition to the development. The march began at the Irani Barangay Dargah and proceeded to the burial ground (Sashmana Bhumi), where protesters raised slogans denouncing the attack. Some participants carried portraits of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and voiced anger over the incident. Speakers said India and Iran have historically shared cordial relations, recalling ties during the tenures of former Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi and Atal Bihari Vajpayee. They urged the Government of India to raise its voice against the United States. Police personnel were deployed to maintain law and order. The protest ended peacefully without incident.

ALMATTI WATER PARK BOOSTS SUMMER TOURISM

VIJAYAPURA

A newly developed water amusement park at the historic Lal Bahadur Shastri Reservoir in Almatti was formally inaugurated by district ministers on Sunday, adding a fresh attraction to North Karnataka's popular tourist circuit.

Spread across five acres behind the helipad area of the iconic Almatti Dam, the park is expected to draw large crowds during the summer season. Almatti is already known for its scenic beauty, wide water spread, well-maintained gardens and peaceful surroundings along the banks of the Krishna River. During hot months, families, youth and student groups visit the reservoir to relax and enjoy nature.

Tourists from across Karnataka, as well as neighbouring states like Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh, frequently travel to Almatti. Its central location and good road and rail connectivity have made it a preferred weekend and holiday destination.



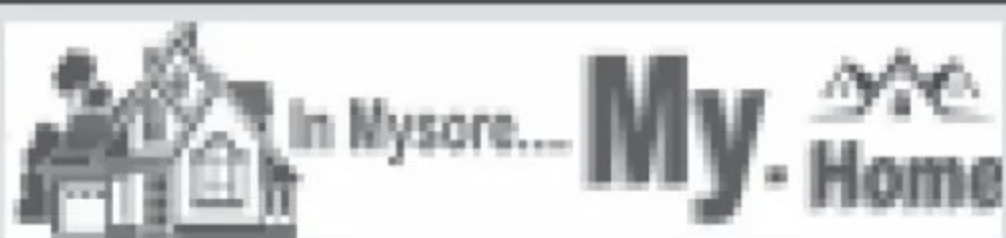
The new water park offers five types of water slides designed for different age groups. There are separate game zones for children, water sliders suitable for children and senior citizens, a large family slider, exclusive slides for youth and a dedicated pool area for young visitors.

The facility also includes a main building with security rooms, a waiting hall, locker rooms, bathing areas and toilets. A balancing water tank, landscaped pathways and a first-aid centre have been set up to ensure safety and comfort.

Officials believe the park will significantly boost tourism and strengthen Almatti's reputation as a leading summer getaway in North Karnataka.



MYSORE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY



E-Auction Notification of Corner, Intermediate, Premium Sites in prominent locations
Developed by Mysore Development Authority
No.MDA/E-AN/02/2025-26 / 27.02.2026

1) E-Auction Commencement Date: 11.03.2026 after 6.00 PM Indian Standard Time 2) Last date for expressing interest to participate in the e-auction for serial numbers 1 to 50 : 23.03.2026 up to 5.00 PM Indian Standard Time And the date of commencement of direct bidding for e-auction is 26.03.2026 at 11.00 AM Indian Standard Time and the date of Closing direct bidding is 27.03.2026 upto 4:00 PM Indian Standard Time (Delta Time 5:00 minutes) 3) Last date for expressing interest to participate in the e-auction for serial numbers 51 to 100 : 23.03.2026 up to 5.00 PM Indian Standard Time And the date of commencement of direct bidding for e-auction is 30.03.2026 at 11.00 AM Indian Standard Time and the date of Closing direct bidding is 01.04.2026 upto 4:00 PM Indian Standard Time (Delta Time 5:00 minutes) 4) Last date for expressing interest to participate in the e-auction for serial numbers 101 to 150 : 23.03.2026 up to 5.00 PM Indian Standard Time And the date of commencement of direct bidding for e-auction is 02.04.2026 at 11.00 AM Indian Standard Time and the date of Closing direct bidding is 04.04.2026 upto 4:00 PM Indian Standard Time (Delta Time 5:00 minutes). 5) Last date for expressing interest to participate in the e-auction for serial numbers 151 to 200 : 23.03.2026 up to 5.00 PM Indian Standard Time And the date of commencement of direct bidding for e-auction is 06.04.2026 at 11.00 AM Indian Standard Time and the date of Closing direct bidding is 07.04.2026 upto 4:00 PM Indian Standard Time (Delta Time 5:00 minutes).

Sl. No	Layout Name	Site No.	Inter./ Corner	Road Facing/ In Mtr.	Measurement (In mtrs)		Area in Sq mtrs	Value of Sq. mtrs	Site Value (Rs. In Lakhs)
					N-S	E-W			
Corner and Intermediate sites									
1	Nachanahalli-Kuppaluru 3rd Stage 'D' Block	99	Corner	West 9.00	13.00	18.00	234.00	79256.00	185.46
2	JP Nagara 1st Stage 'F' Block	72	Corner	E-N 9.00	24.00	(18.00+19.00)/2	444.00	79256.00	351.90
3	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	754	Corner	12-9 E-N	11.20	18.00	201.06	64986.00	131.02
4	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1025/B	Intermediate	East 9.00	6.00	9.00	54.00	58003.00	31.32
5	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1050/B	Intermediate	West 9.00	6.00	9.00	54.00	58003.00	31.32
6	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1229	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	58003.00	62.64
7	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1615	Corner	18-9 N-E	12.00	9.00	108.00	64986.00	70.18
8	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1616	Corner	9.00 E-S	12.00	9.00	108.00	64986.00	70.18
9	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1631	Corner	12-9 E-N	12.00	8.50	102.00	64986.00	66.29
10	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1631/F	Corner	9.00 N-W	12.00	(13.00+14.60)/2	165.60	64986.00	107.62
11	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1632	Corner	12-9 E-S	12.00	8.50	102.00	64986.00	66.29
12	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1632/A	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	58003.00	62.64
13	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1632/F	Corner	9.00 W-S	12.00	(11.00+13.00)/2	144.00	64986.00	93.58
14	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1638/A	Intermediate	North 9.00	9.00	6.00	54.00	58003.00	31.32
15	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1638/C	Corner	9.00 N-W	9.00	(9.50+7.80)/2	77.85	64986.00	50.59
16	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1644	Corner	12-9 E-N	9.00	(5.40+6.00)/2	51.30	64986.00	33.34
17	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1645	Corner	12-9 E-S	9.00	5.40	48.60	64986.00	31.58
18	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1651/D	Corner	9.00 W-S	9.00	(7.80+6.00)/2	62.10	64986.00	40.36
19	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1660	Corner	9.00 W-S	(8.50+8.20)/2	12.00	100.20	64986.00	65.12
20	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1660/A	Intermediate	West 9.00	9.00	12.00	108.00	58003.00	62.64
21	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1670	Corner	18-12 N-W	9.00	12.00	108.00	64986.00	70.18
22	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	1671	Corner	18-12 N-E	9.00	12.00	108.00	64986.00	70.18
23	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	2929	Corner	9-12 N-W	9.00	5.90	53.10	64986.00	34.51
24	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	E-141/A	Intermediate	North 9.00	(0+8.98)/2	37.00	166.13	58003.00	96.36
25	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	2930	Corner	12.00 S-W	9.00	5.90	53.10	64986.00	34.51
26	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	2956	Corner	12.00 S-E	(5.00+6.20)/2	9.00	50.40	64986.00	32.75
27	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	2957	Corner	12-9 S-W	(7.00+6.20)/2	9.00	59.40	64986.00	38.60
28	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	2963	Intermediate	West 9.00	6.00	9.00	54.00	58003.00	31.32
29	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	2969	Corner	9.00 N-W	6.00	9.00	54.00	64986.00	35.09
30	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	3098	Intermediate	South 12.00	18.00	12.00	216.00	58003.00	125.29
31	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	4499	Intermediate	North 24.00	24.00	15.00	360.00	58003.00	208.81
32	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	4501	Corner	24-12 N-E	24.00	(15.50+17.50)/2	396.00	64986.00	257.34
33	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	4553	Corner	12-12 S-E	12.00	11.80	141.60	64986.00	92.02
34	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	4516	Corner	12-12 S-E	18.00	(16.00+17.00)/2	297.00	64986.00	193.01
35	Dattagalli 3rd Stage	2944	Corner	12-9 N-E	6.80	9.00	61.20	64986.00	39.77
36	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	1756	Corner	N-E 9.00	24.00	16.15	387.60	86009.00	333.37
37	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	1766	Corner	N-E 9.00	24.00	(16.50+16.00)/2	390.00	86009.00	335.44
38	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	2847	Corner	E-S 9.00	12.00	10.40	124.80	86009.00	107.34
39	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	4776	Corner	9-12 N-W	9.00	(3.90+3.96)/2	35.37	86009.00	30.42
40	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	6128	Corner	N-E 9.00	24.00	12.20	292.80	86009.00	251.83
41	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	7030	Corner	N-E 9.00	4.60	18.00	82.80	86009.00	71.22
42	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	7281	Corner	S-E 9.00	8.40	12.00	100.80	86009.00	86.70
43	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	7326	Corner	S-W 9.00	8.80	12.00	105.60	86009.00	90.83
44	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9004	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
45	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9005	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
46	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9006	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
47	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9007	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
48	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9008	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
49	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9009	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
50	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9010	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
51	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9011	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
52	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9013	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
53	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9016	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
54	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9028	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
55	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9029	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
56	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9030	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
57	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9031	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
58	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9032	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
59	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9033	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
60	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9034	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
61	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9035	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
62	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9036	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
63	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9037	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
64	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9038	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
65	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9063	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
66	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9064	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
67	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9065	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
68	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9067	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
69	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9068	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
70	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9069	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
71	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9070	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
72	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9071	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
73	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9072	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
74	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9073	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
75	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9074	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
76	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9075	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
77	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9076	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59275.00	64.02
78	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9089	Intermediate	South 9.00	18.00	12.00	216.00	59275.00	128.03
79	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9090	Intermediate	South 9.00	18.00	12.00	216.00	59275.00	128.03
80	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9091	Intermediate	South 9.00	18.00	12.00	216.00	59275.00	128.03
81	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9092	Intermediate	South 9.00	18.00	12.00	216.00	59275.00	128.03
82	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	9093	Intermediate	South 9.00	18.00	12.00	216.00	59275.00	128.03
83	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	11160	Intermediate	West 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	59275.00	128.03
84	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	11161	Intermediate	West 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	59275.00	128.03
85	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	11162	Intermediate	West 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	59275.00	128.03
86	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	11162/B	Intermediate	West 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	59275.00	128.03
87	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	11162/A	Intermediate	West 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	59275.00	128.03
88	Vijayanagara 4th Stage 2nd Phase	11165	Intermediate	West 9.00	12.0				

Alipur observes mourning after Khamenei death

Residents gathered holding photos of Ayatollah Khamenei, praying and weeping, following his death

CHIKKABALLAPURA

Deep sorrow gripped Alipur village after news spread about the reported assassination of Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in an alleged Israeli-American attack.

Members of the Shia Muslim community, who form a large part of the village population, announced three days of mourning to express their grief.

As a mark of respect, shops in the village remained closed and an unannounced bandh was observed peacefully.

Many residents gathered holding photographs of Khamenei and offered prayers.

Some were seen in tears as they remembered him as a spiritual guide and leader. Groups of men dressed in black walked through the village streets in silence, while a few raised slogans expressing anger against Israel and the United States.

Alipur, with a population of



around 20,000, has a significant Shia Muslim community. For many residents, Iran holds deep religious importance and is regarded as a sacred land.

Community elders said that Khamenei’s religious guidance was followed closely by several families in the village.

Locals also recalled that Ayatollah Khamenei had visited Alipur in 1986, an event that strengthened emotional ties between the village and Iran. That visit is still remem-

bered by senior residents as a historic moment.

Despite the strong emotions, the mourning remained peaceful, with no untoward incidents reported.

Police kept a close watch in the area as a precautionary measure.

Village leaders appealed to people to maintain calm and unity during the mourning period while continuing their daily responsibilities after the three-day observance concludes.

Rajanna reacts lightly to dinner snub

TUMAKURU

Former minister K. N. Rajanna responded with humor and calm to questions about not being invited to Magadi MLA Balakrishna’s birthday dinner. Speaking to reporters after attending an Iftar gathering in Tumakuru, Rajanna said, “If I had been invited for dinner, I would have gone. If someone calls you for a meal, why wouldn’t you go?”

Clarifying that he was not invited to the dinner meeting hosted by H. C. Balakrishna, Rajanna dismissed any political tension surrounding the event. He said that Congress MLAs remain united despite speculation about internal differences. “All 138 Congress MLAs are together. We are one,” he said, brushing aside



suggestions of factionalism.

When asked about certain MLAs being seen as supporters of D. K. Shivakumar, Rajanna maintained that the party stands united and that such labels should not create divisions. Rajanna also spoke about his recent visit to Delhi, where he met Mallikarjun

Kharge. He said he had conveyed concerns about confusion within the Karnataka unit of the Congress. “I told our senior leaders that uncertainty is harming the government’s image and the party’s respect. This confusion should be cleared,” he explained.

Responding to comments

Rajanna, not invited to Balakrishna’s dinner, dismissed tension, affirming all 138 Congress MLAs remain united without factionalism

that the Congress might struggle in the next election, Rajanna said political wins and losses are part of the democratic process. Out of 224 seats, Congress holds 138, and he expressed confidence that the party remains strong and capable of returning to power.

He concluded by saying discussions within the party are aimed at strengthening the organization and maintaining unity, not creating public disputes.

Renukacharya Jayanti inspires equality and peace

CHITRADURGA

The birth anniversary of Jagadguru Renukacharya was celebrated with devotion and reflection at the Deputy Commissioner’s Office Hall in Chitradurga on Sunday. The program was organized by the District

Administration, Zilla Panchayat, Kannada and Culture Department, and the Municipal Council.

District Guarantee Scheme Implementation Authority Chairman R. Shivanna Ganjigatte said the path of equality shown by great saints is essential for today’s

society. “Philosophers like Renukacharya fought against social inequality and spread the message of equality. Their principles continue to guide us like a beacon,” he said. He urged people to adopt these ideals in daily life.

Sub-Divisional Officer

Kantaraj highlighted the ten principles preached by Renukacharya, including non-violence, truth, compassion, forgiveness, charity, worship of Shiva, and chanting of the Panchakshari mantra. He noted that these teachings promote peace and harmony across the world.

Sl. No.	Layout Name	Site No.	Inter./ Corner	Road Facing/ In Mtr.	Measurement (In mtrs)		Area in Sq mtrs	Value of Sq. mtrs	Site Value (Rs. In Lakhs)
					N-S	E-W			
116	Vijayanagara 2nd Stage	5100	Corner	South & West 9.0 & 6.0	9.00	(4.50+4.0)/2	38.25	99318.00	37.99
117	Vijayanagara 2nd Stage	5715	Corner	West & South 9.0 & 9.0	(8.50+2.00)/2	18.40	96.60	99318.00	95.94
118	Vijayanagara 2nd Stage	4795	Corner	South & West 9.0 & 9.0	(9.5+8.5)/2	12.00	108.00	99318.00	107.26
119	Devanur 2nd Stage 2nd Phase	2014	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	45420.00	98.11
120	Devanur 2nd Stage 2nd Phase	2167	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	45420.00	98.11
121	Devanur 2nd Stage 2nd Phase	2168	Intermediate	North 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	45420.00	98.11
122	Devanur 2nd Stage 2nd Phase	2280/D	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	45420.00	98.11
123	Devanur 2nd Stage 2nd Phase	2280/E	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	45420.00	98.11
124	Devanur 2nd Stage 2nd Phase	2280/F	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	45420.00	98.11
125	Devanur 2nd Stage 2nd Phase	2280/G	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	45420.00	98.11
126	Devanur 2nd Stage 2nd Phase	2280/H	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	45420.00	98.11
127	Devanur 2nd Stage 2nd Phase	2280/I	Intermediate	South9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	45420.00	98.11
128	Devanur 2nd Stage 2nd Phase	2280/J	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	45420.00	98.11
129	Devanur 2nd Stage 2nd Phase	2280/K	Intermediate	South 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	45420.00	98.11
130	Devanur 2nd Stage 2nd Phase	2233	Intermediate	West 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	45420.00	98.11
131	Devanur 2nd Stage 2nd Phase	2230	Intermediate	West 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	45420.00	98.11
132	Devanur 2nd Stage 2nd Phase	2231	Intermediate	West 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	45420.00	98.11
133	Shanthaveri Gopal Gowda	01	Corner	N:9.00 E:9.00	9.00	11.70	105.30	59180.00	62.32
134	Shanthaveri Gopal Gowda	12	Corner	S:12.00 E:9.00	6.60	11.50	75.90	59180.00	44.92
135	Shanthaveri Gopal Gowda	24	Corner	N:9.00 W:9.00	9.50	11.70	111.15	59180.00	65.78
136	Shanthaveri Gopal Gowda	79	Corner	S:12.00 W:9.00	9.00	12.00	108.00	59180.00	63.91
137	Shanthaveri Gopal Gowda	90	Corner	N: 9.00 W:9.00	10.00	11.00	110.00	59180.00	65.10
138	Shanthaveri Gopal Gowda	100	Corner	S:12.00 W:12.00	12.20	18.00	219.60	59180.00	129.96
139	Shanthaveri Gopal Gowda	133	Corner	N:12.00 E: 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	59180.00	127.83
140	Shanthaveri Gopal Gowda	144	Corner	S:12.00 E:9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	59180.00	127.83
141	Shanthaveri Gopal Gowda	121	Corner	S:12.00 W:9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	59180.00	127.83
142	Shanthaveri Gopal Gowda	120	Corner	S:12.00 E:9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	59180.00	127.83
143	Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar	280	Corner	S:9.00 W:12.00	13.00	18.00	234.00	59180.00	138.48
144	Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar	300	Corner	N:12.00 E:9.00	9.00	12.00	108.00	59180.00	63.91
145	Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar	318	Corner	N:12.00 W:12.00	12.00	6.00	72.00	59180.00	42.61
146	Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar	338	Corner	N:12.00 E: 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59180.00	63.91
147	Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar	363	Corner	S:9.00 W:12.00	12.00	13.70	164.40	59180.00	97.29
148	Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar	485	Corner	S:9.00 W:12.00	9.00	12.00	108.00	59180.00	63.91
149	Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar	653	Corner	S:9.00 W:9.00	13.00	12.00	156.00	59180.00	92.32
150	Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar	668	Corner	N:9.00 W:9.00	9.00	12.00	108.00	59180.00	63.91
151	Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar	863	Corner	N:9.00 W:12.00	18.00	12.00	216.00	59180.00	127.83
152	Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar	923	Corner	N:18.00 W:12.00	24.00	15.00	360.00	59180.00	213.05
153	Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar	1313	Corner	N:9.00 E:9.00	9.00	12.00	108.00	59180.00	63.91
154	Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar	1314	Corner	N:9.00 W:12.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	59180.00	127.83
155	Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar	1322	Corner	N:12.00 W:12.00	9.00	12.00	108.00	59180.00	63.91
156	Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar	1343	Corner	N:12.00 W:12.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	59180.00	63.91
157	Lal Bahadur Shastri Nagar	1415	Corner	SN:9.00 E:12.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	59180.00	127.83
158	Lalithadrinagar (South)	721	Corner	North: 18.00	9.00	12.00	108.00	59180.00	63.91
159	Lalithadrinagar (South)	722	Corner	North:18.00	9.00	12.00	108.00	59180.00	63.91
160	Gayathripuram 1st Stage	388	Intermediate	West: 9.00	9.00	14.00	126.00	64560.00	81.35
161	Gayathripuram 1st Stage	373	Intermediate	East: 9.00	12.00	15.00	180.00	64560.00	116.21
162	Gayathripuram 1st Stage	345	Intermediate	West: 9.00	10.00	12.00	120.00	64560.00	77.47
163	Gayathripuram 1st Stage	341	Intermediate	West: 9.00	10.70	12.00	128.4	64560.00	82.90
164	Gayathripuram 1st Stage	314	Intermediate	West: 9.00	12.00	9.00	108.00	64560.00	69.72
165	Sathagalli 2nd Stage	4622	Corner	9.00 E-N	(9.00+9.30)/2	(6.60+6.60)/2	60.39	37660.00	22.74
166	Sathagalli 2nd Stage	4649	Corner	9.00 W-N	9.00	6.00	54.00	37660.00	20.34
167	Sathagalli 2nd Stage	4648	Corner	9.00 S-W	9.00	(6.10+6.30)/2	55.80	37660.00	21.01
168	Sathagalli 2nd Stage	4597	Corner	9.00 N-W	9.20	6.10	56.12	37660.00	21.13
169	Sathagalli 2nd Stage	4596	Corner	9.00 W-S	9.00	(6.15+6.20)/2	55.57	37660.00	20.93
170	Sathagalli 2nd Stage	4545	Corner	9.00 N	9.00	(6.10+6.15)/2	55.12	37660.00	20.76
171	Sathagalli 2nd Stage	5406	Corner	9.00 E-W	9.00	(6.00+8.50)/2	65.25	37660.00	24.57

172	Sathagalli 2nd Stage	5405	Intermediate	9.00 South	9.00	6.00	54.00	32280.00	17.43
173	Sathagalli 2nd Stage	5404	Intermediate	9.00 South	9.00	6.00	54.00	32280.00	17.43
174	Sathagalli 2nd Stage	5403	Intermediate	9.00 South	9.00	6.00	54.00	32280.00	17.43
175	Sathagalli 2nd Stage	5402	Intermediate	9.00 South	9.00	6.00	54.00	32280.00	17.43
176	Hanchya-Sathagalli 'B' Zone	1698	Intermediate	9.00 East	15.00	24.00	360.00	48643.00	175.11
177	Hanchya-Sathagalli 'B' Zone	1697	Intermediate	9.00 East	15.00	24.00	360.00	48643.00	175.11
178	Hanchya-Sathagalli 'B' Zone	1696	Intermediate	9.00 East	15.00	24.00	360.00	48643.00	175.11
179	Hanchya-Sathagalli 'B' Zone	1695	Intermediate	9.00 East	15.00	24.00	360.00	48643.00	175.11
180	Hanchya-Sathagalli 'B' Zone	1694	Intermediate	9.00 East	15.00	24.00	360.00	48643.00	175.11
181	Hanchya-Sathagalli 'B' Zone	1693	Intermediate	9.00 East	15.00	24.00	360.00	48643.00	175.11
182	Hanchya-Sathagalli 'B' Zone	1692	Intermediate	9.00 East	15.00	24.00	360.00	48643.00	175.11
183	Hanchya-Sathagalli 'B' Zone	1688	Intermediate	9.00 East	15.00	24.00	360.00	48643.00	175.11
184	Hanchya-Sathagalli 'B' Zone	1689	Intermediate	9.00 East	15.00	24.00	360.00	48643.00	175.11
185	Hanchya-Sathagalli 'B' Zone	1690	Intermediate	9.00 East	15.00	24.00	360.00	48643.00	175.11
186	Hanchya-Sathagalli 'B' Zone	1691	Intermediate	9.00 East	15.00	24.00	360.00	48643.00	175.11
187	Vasanth Nagar	651	Intermediate	12.00 E-W	9.00	12.00	108.00	37660.00	40.67
188	Vasanth Nagar	682	Intermediate	12.00 E-W	9.00	12.00	108.00	37660.00	40.67
189	Vasanth Nagar	725	Intermediate	West 12.00	9.00	12.00	108.00	37660.00	40.67
190	Vasanth Nagar	754	Intermediate	West 12.00	9.00	12.00	108.00	37660.00	40.67
191	Vasanth Nagar	09	Intermediate	West 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	37660.00	81.35
192	Vasanth Nagar	10	Intermediate	West 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	37660.00	81.35
193	Vasanth Nagar	11	Intermediate	West 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	37660.00	81.35
194	Vasanth Nagar	12	Intermediate	West 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	37660.00	81.35
195	Vasanth Nagar	210	Intermediate	West 9.00	12.00	18.00	216.00	37660.00	81.35
196	Vasanth Nagar	1910	Intermediate	East 24.00	15.00	24.00	360.00	37660.00	135.58
197	Vasanth Nagar	1911	Intermediate	East 24.00	15.00	24.00	360.00	37660.00	135.58
198	Vasanth Nagar	1912	Intermediate	East 24.00	15.00	24.00	360.00	37660.00	135.58
199	Vasanth Nagar	1913	Intermediate	East 24.00	15.00	24.00	360.00	37660.00	135.58
200	Vasanth Nagar	1914	Intermediate	East 24.00	15.00	24.00	360.00	37660.00	135.58
Total (Lakhs)									18629.43

Terms and Conditions of e-auction

1) The Participants of the auction should be a citizen of India. Partnership firm/Limited companies/Trusts registered in India may also participate in the e-auction. 2) E-auction participants need more information they can download the simplified e-auction user guide by logging on to <http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in> available on Citizen Division Home Page. For additional information visit kppp Portal or Contact 080 - 46010000 and 080-68948777 3) The Participants should download the Specimen Signature format (Write the Name & Father Name in Kannada & English) and Contact Details format from <http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>. upload the filled formats. 4) Those who want to buy the e-auction sites jointly, should also upload the documents jointly in e-auction portal. 5) Sites will be auctioned on 'as is where is' condition. There is no provision for change of site. 6) There should be minimum of 2 bidders for the e-auction Sites. Single bidder will be rejected. 7) The 5 minutes of delta time shall be extended to the last moment bids of e-auction. For example: If the e-auction Bidding close Time is 16.00 hours. In case any bid submitted in 15.57 hours, the closure time will be extended to another 5 Minutes i.e. 16.02 hours. 8) EMD payable to participate in e-auction Rs.4.00 Lakhs for sites having the base price Rs.1.00 Crore and Above. Rs.2.00 Lakh for the sites having the base price less than Rs.1.00 Crore and e-Auction processing fees also to be deposited through Debit card/ Credit Card/Net Banking to ICICI bank by e-procurement protal. 9) The minimum Bid change price is Rs.25,000/- for the sites which is having base price below Rs. 1.00 Crore and Rs.1,00,000/- for the sites which is having base price Rs. 1.00 Crore and above. 10) The highest bidder should check the site approval status in

QUICK READ



Renukacharya ideals guide harmonious society building: Hallad Bidar

The ideals and philosophy of Jagadguru Renukacharya are essential for building a peaceful and progressive society, said C. G. Hallad during the Renukacharya Jayanti Mahotsav held in Bhalki.

The programme was organised by the taluk administration at the Tahsildar's office on Sunday. After inaugurating the event, Hallad said Jagadguru Sri Renukacharya and the Shivasharanas offered deep guidance on the meaning and purpose of human life. He noted that Renukacharya spread the message of victory to humanity and peace through dharma. He urged people to follow these teachings in their daily lives.

Dharwad teacher suspended after student gold theft

Dharwad
Rajashakar Vadathera, a teacher at Vidyaranya School, Dharwad, was suspended for allegedly taking 8 tolas of gold from an SSLC student under the pretext of handing over a question paper. After the student informed his parents, Vadathera reportedly threatened him, causing the teen to attempt suicide by consuming poison. He was hospitalized for treatment. The police initially did not register the complaint, prompting the parents to appeal to the commissioner. Following a K.E. Board meeting on February 27, Vadathera's suspension, effective May 28, and a departmental inquiry were ordered, raising concerns about student safety.

Teen girl tragically killed by wild elephant

Madikeri
Seventeen-year-old Pooja, a First PUC student at St Michael School, was killed in a forest attack in Bettathur village, Madikeri taluk. Returning home from college around 5:30 pm, she was walking from the bus stop when a wild elephant suddenly charged and fatally injured her. Her body is now at Madikeri Government Hospital mortuary. Villagers protested, blaming the forest department for failing to prevent such attacks. They demand urgent measures to avoid future tragedies. The incident has left the community in shock and grief, highlighting the ongoing dangers of human-wildlife conflict in the area.

India advances nuclear power with indigenous technology

Dr. Mohanty said India is expanding nuclear power with PHWRs, LWRs, and SMRs, prioritizing safety and quality

KARWAR

India has achieved complete self-reliance in nuclear power generation by using fully indigenous technology and equipment, said Dr. Ajit Kumar Mohanty, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and Secretary of the Department of Atomic Energy.

He was speaking at Kaiga after inaugurating the first concreting work for Units 5 and 6 of the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited project. He said the country has set an ambitious target of generating 100 gigawatts of nuclear power by 2047. Out of this, NPCIL aims to contribute 54 gigawatts.



watts.

Dr. Mohanty said India plans to expand nuclear generation through pressurised heavy water reactors, light water reactors

and small modular reactors. He stressed that safety and quality remain top priorities in all nuclear projects. The new Kaiga units are 700 MW PHWRs de-

signed with advanced safety features and are considered among the safest in the world. He added that the first of the two new units is expected to begin power generation within about 60 months. The project is being executed using a new strategy with major EPC packages covering nuclear and turbine islands, helping faster co-ordination and timely completion. At present, four 220 MW units operate at Kaiga with a total capacity of 880 MW. After completion of Units 5 and 6, the total capacity will rise to 2,280 MW. NPCIL Chairman and Managing Director Bhuvan Chandra Pathak and other senior officials were present.

Following the GST hike, superior tobacco prices fell to ₹270–280/kg, sparking protests and auction suspensions in Hunsur and Periyapatna

Tobacco prices crash sparks urgent board meeting

MYSURU

The Tobacco Board will hold an urgent meeting in Mysuru on Monday, March 2, to address the sharp drop in tobacco prices that has worried farmers across Karnataka. The meeting will bring together MPs and MLAs from key tobacco-growing regions, including Mysuru, Kodagu, Chamara-janagar, Hassan, Mandya, Periyapatna, Hunsur, H. D. Kote, K. R. Nagar, and Arkalgud. Tobacco Board officials, including Chairman Yashwanth Kumar Chidipothu, Executive Director B. Vishwasree, and Director (Auctions) B. C. Srinivas, will attend, alongside major cigarette manufacturers and exporters such as ITC. The discussion comes after farmers expressed concerns following the recent GST hike on tobacco from 28% to 40% by the Centre, which contributed to a sudden price collapse.



Prior to the GST increase, superior grade tobacco was fetching around ₹320 per kg, but prices dropped to ₹270–280 per kg in the weeks after the Union Budget. The fall has been linked to reduced procurement by traders and manufacturers, despite earlier commitments to purchase larger quantities.

Protests erupted in Hunsur and Periyapatna, two of Karnataka's main tobacco regions, causing temporary suspension of auctions across multiple platforms. While auctions have re-

sumed, farmers remain anxious, with about 40 million tonnes of tobacco still unsold out of the total 85 million tonnes. Mysuru MP Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar said MPs from Karnataka and neighbouring Andhra Pradesh requested Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to reconsider the GST hike. At the same time, Minister for Animal Husbandry and Sericulture K. Venkatesh criticized traders for scaling back procurement mid-season despite initially submitting higher indents to the Tobacco Board.

Farmers are hopeful that prices for superior grade tobacco will stabilize above ₹300 per kg and eventually return to pre-GST levels. The Monday meeting is expected to explore measures to protect the livelihood of tobacco growers and restore confidence in the market.



Yaduveer Wadiyar checks health of activist

MADIKERI

Mysuru-Kodagu MP Yaduveer Wadiyar visited the district hospital to inquire about the health of Gautam, a Hindu activist who was attacked in Napoklu. Speaking to reporters, the MP described the incident as serious and called for strict action against the accused.

He praised the police for arresting all four individuals involved in the attack and emphasized that such incidents must not be allowed to recur. Yaduveer Wadiyar highlighted concerns about repeated communal tensions under the current Congress government, citing similar incidents in Nagamangala and Mandya during Hindu celebrations.

MP seeks help for stranded tourists

DAVANAGERE

Davangere Member of Parliament Dr. Prabha Mallikarjun has appealed to the Union Ministry of External Affairs for urgent intervention to rescue 50 Kannadigas stranded in Dubai due to the ongoing conflict in parts of the Middle East.

In a statement, she said the group of tourists from Davangere district had travelled to the United Arab Emirates from Bengaluru on February 23, 2026. Among them, 15 are from Jagalur taluk, while the remaining 35 belong to neighbouring Ballari and Chitradurga districts. Their return flight, scheduled for 9:30 pm on February 28, was cancelled at the last minute, leaving them stranded in Dubai. Reports suggest that several flight services have been disrupted due to the tense warlike situation in the region. Dr. Mallikarjun expressed concern over the safety of the tourists and urged the Central government to act quickly. She requested the Indian Embassy in Dubai to coordinate with local authorities and make arrangements for their safe and early return to India.

The MP said that detailed



Dr. Mallikarjun urged swift Central government action for tourists' safety, requesting the Indian Embassy in Dubai coordinate with local authorities for their secure, early return

information about the stranded passengers has already been shared with the concerned authorities. She voiced hope that swift steps would be taken to resolve the issue and bring relief to anxious family members waiting back home. Responding to her appeal, officials from the Union Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian Embassy have reportedly assured that necessary action will be taken to assist the stranded citizens at the earliest.

Women's Spandana program to address local issues



MANDYA

State Women's Commission Chairperson Nagalakshmi Chaudhary announced plans to organize a "Women's Spandana" program in Mandya, aimed at addressing the problems faced by women in the region. She made the statement while attending the 41st annual festival of Sri Shaneshwara Swamy Temple in Kachchigere village.

Chaudhary encouraged students to focus on their studies and aim for high positions so that Kachchigere could become a model village for the state. She emphasized that the Women's Commission is committed to taking necessary steps for women's empowerment and providing timely support to resolve their

issues. During the event, local achievers and activists from various fields, including cinema and music, were felicitated for their contributions. The program celebrated talent and encouraged community participation.

Notable attendees included Manjunath, film actor Kiran Raju, Vinay Kumar, television actor Rakesh, singer Gyan Gururaj, priest Prasanna Shankrappa, and local leaders Mahantappa and Ullas.

The upcoming Spandana program is expected to bring government officials and women from the village together, providing a platform to discuss issues, suggest solutions, and strengthen women's participation in local development initiatives.

Hunsur Waqf board supports minorities with Ranjan aid

HUNSUR

In a heartwarming gesture, the Hunsur Mysore District Waqf Board distributed groceries and Ranjan kits to Imams and Mauzens of the taluk at Masjid-e-Ala hall on Dodda Masidi Street. The initiative was conducted alongside former MLA HP Manjunath, who also provided personal financial assistance to the community on the auspicious day of the Ranjan festival.

The items were handed out by HP Manjunath, District Waqf Board President Azizullah Ajju, and member Azgar Pasha Siddique Amjat. Manjunath personally presented cash gifts to the religious leaders and conveyed his wishes for their well-being. Speaking to reporters, he expressed his gratitude for the continuous



support and blessings of the Muslim community, calling their love "like a son" and affirming his commitment to support their development initiatives.

Azizullah Ajju praised Manjunath's efforts, stating that he has consistently supported the community in times of hardship and happiness. Ajju also highlighted the Waqf Board's new approach under his leadership.

New check dam brings farmers hope

SAKLESHPUR

Farmers in Alur taluk have received encouraging news with the launch of a new check dam project worth ₹1 crore. The foundation stone was laid for the construction of the dam across Konanakatte Lake in Ajenahalli village, under the limits of Talur gram panchayat.

The project aims to conserve rainwater that usually flows away during the monsoon. Once completed, it is expected to provide irrigation support to nearly 50 acres of farmland. Local farmers believe this will help them continue cultivation even during the dry summer months.

Speaking at the event, MLA Cement Manju said saving water means saving farmers. He explained that when crops grow well, villages prosper, and when villages prosper, the state

moves forward. He described the check dam as more than just a cement structure, calling it a strong foundation for farmers' dreams and future security.

Officials said the project will also help improve the groundwater level in nearby areas. With better water storage, farmers may be able to grow crops in two seasons instead of one. This could increase agricultural productivity and provide financial stability to many families who depend entirely on farming.

Several officials, local leaders and villagers attended the programme. The gathering expressed hope that the work would be completed on time without delays. Villagers shared their happiness over the development initiative and said it would open new opportunities for agriculture in the region.

DRUG-FREE CAMPAIGN

MASSIVE RESPONSE TO POLICE PRIDE RUN

MYSURU

Thousands of people took part in the "Our Police, Our Pride" Run organized jointly by Mysuru City and District Police on Sunday. The event was part of a State-wide initiative aimed at promoting fitness, creating a drug-free society and spreading cyber awareness. District Minister H.C. Mahadevappa flagged off the run at the Mysuru Palace premises in the presence of several dignitaries. MLAs G.T. Deve Gowda and T.S. Srivatsa, along with senior



police officials and district authorities, participated in the programme.

The run featured both 5K

and 10K categories. Participants in the 5K run began at Kote Anjaneya Swamy Temple near the palace and cov-

ered major city roads before returning to the starting point. The 10K runners followed a longer route covering important landmarks including Manasagangothri and Bogadi Road.

In the 5K civilian men's category, Nithin M secured first place, while Vidya topped the civilian women's section. Among police personnel, Vinod won in the men's category and Ms. Bhuvaneshwari finished first among policewomen.

In the 10K event, Purushotham claimed first prize in

the civilian men's category and Ms. Ashwini emerged winner among civilian women. Megharaj H K secured the top spot among policemen, while Malashri Jadav led the policewomen's category.

Senior officials including Inspector General M.B. Boralingaiah, Deputy Commissioner Lakshmikanth Reddy, City Police Commissioner Seema Latkar and Superintendent Mallikarjun Baladandi were present. The strong turnout reflected public support for the police and the message of healthy living.

'SCIENTIFIC THINKING MUST GROW IN STUDENTS'



DHARWAD

Farmer leader Gangadhar Patil Kulkarni called upon students to develop a scientific attitude in their daily lives, saying that National Science Day should not be limited to just one day of celebration.

He spoke after inaugurating a science exhibition organised at Government High School, Mardagi, as part of National Science Day. The programme was led by Taluk Mrs.

Girijamma Gangadhar Bellary, also known as Moolimani. Addressing students, Kulkarni urged them not to accept anything blindly and to always ask questions. He encouraged them to build curiosity, critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

"No matter how much science advances, a hungry person still depends on a farmer

for food," he said, adding that agriculture remains the backbone of the country. He advised students to take interest in farming and gain knowledge about it.

School principal Vijayalakshmi Arkasali, in her introductory speech, said students should learn about medicinal plants used in daily life. She noted that questions like what, why and how help shape young minds into scientists. Students performed experiments to formally inaugurate the exhibition. Class 9 students presented an environmental song, and Shambhavi Bikkaji spoke about C. V. Raman. The exhibition featured models on environmental protection, solar energy, water conservation, agricultural technology and health care. Visitors appreciated the creativity and effort of the students.

QUICK READ



TMC protests in Bengal's Hasnabad over 'targetted'

KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress protested in Hasnabad of West Bengal's North 24 Parganas over targetted deletion of names from the final voters' list, police said on Sunday. Trinamool Congress' local leaders and activists burnt tyres on the road and raised slogans against the Election Commission of India (ECI). The protesters also burnt an effigy of Leader of the Opposition in the state Assembly, Suwendu Adhikari. The local Lebukhali Road was blocked due to the protest movement. Traffic was also stopped. Later, the police went there and brought the situation under control.

CJI Surya Kant offers prayers at Tirumala temple

TIRUPATI

Chief Justice of India Surya Kant offered prayers at Sri Venkateswara Temple on Sunday. The Chief Justice, who had reached Tirumala, had darshan in the morning. On his arrival at the temple, he was received by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD) Chairman B.R. Naidu, Executive Officer Muddada Ravi Chandra, Additional Executive Officer C.H. Venkaiah Chowdhury, and District Superintendent of Police L. Subbaraidu. On this occasion, the priests traditionally welcomed the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court amidst the chanting of Vedic mantras.

MEA advises foreign in India to contact FRRO for visa help

NEW DELHI

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Sunday issued an advisory for foreign nationals in India, asking those affected by disrupted travel plans due to the ongoing developments in the West Asia region to contact the nearest Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) for visa extension or regularisation. The advisory said: All foreign nationals in India, who have had to change their travel plans due to the ongoing developments in the West Asia region and need assistance with extension of their visa or to regularize their stay, are requested to contact the nearest Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO). The FRRO concerned will help with necessary formalities.

MP plans science park at former Union Carbide site

CM Mohan Yadav proposes memorial, research centre and Science Park in Bhopal

BHOPAL

Mohan Yadav said the Madhya Pradesh government plans to develop a Science Park and a national-level research centre at the site of the former Union Carbide factory in Bhopal.

After meeting Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi, the Chief Minister said he apprised him of various initiatives being undertaken jointly by the Centre and the state government.

In an official statement, Yadav said a comprehensive plan has been prepared to develop 87 acres of land at the former factory site into a Bhopal Gas Tragedy Memorial,

a Science Park, a Convention Centre, a modern laboratory dedicated to national security, and a national research centre focused on development.

Referring to the Bhopal gas tragedy of December 3, 1984, he said the city had witnessed one of the worst industrial disasters in history, in which more than 25,000 people lost their lives over the years. He added that the state government has recently completed the transportation and disposal of hazardous waste stored at the Union Carbide factory premises, marking a significant step toward redevelopment of the site.

The Chief Minister said he



sought guidance from the Union Home Minister regarding the creation of a grand memorial on the vacant land, aimed at preserving the memory of the victims while transforming the area into a centre for scientific advancement and public engagement.

Yadav also informed Shah about events organised to

commemorate the legacy of Samrat Vikramaditya, whom he described as one of the greatest rulers in history. On the law and order front, he said strong action has been taken against Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in the state, noting that Balaghat district had long been affected by such activities. Discussions were also held on organising the Baiga Mahotsav in the district to promote regional development and tribal welfare. Highlighting healthcare initiatives, Yadav said a state-wide vaccination drive to prevent cervical cancer has been launched, under which more than eight lakh girls will receive free vaccines.



Delhi HC to hear CBI plea in excise policy case

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court is scheduled to hear next week a plea filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) challenging a trial court order that discharged AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal, former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia and 21 others in the 2022 Delhi excise policy case.

According to the causelist available on the High Court's official website, the matter is listed before a single-judge Bench of Justice Swarnakanta Sharma on March 9. The CBI has filed a criminal revision petition contesting the detailed order passed by the Rouse Avenue Court, which had declined to frame charges against all 23 accused and held that the prosecution failed to establish even a prima facie case warranting trial.

On February 27, Special Judge (PC Act) Jitendra Singh, in an order spanning more than 1,100 paragraphs, concluded that the case pre-

sented by the CBI was wholly unable to survive judicial scrutiny and stood discredited in its entirety. After examining extensive records and the depositions of nearly 300 prosecution witnesses, the trial court observed that no material had surfaced to raise even a grave suspicion against the accused.

The court further held that compelling the accused to undergo a full-fledged trial in the absence of legally admissible evidence would amount to a manifest miscarriage of justice and an abuse of the criminal process.

The case relates to the Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22 introduced by the then AAP-led government, which was subsequently scrapped amid allegations of corruption and kickbacks. The CBI alleged that the policy was designed to benefit certain private liquor entities, including the so-called South Group, in exchange for alleged upfront bribes that were purportedly routed for electoral purposes.

Sasikala floats Amma Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

CHENNAI

Former Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa's close aide V. K. Sasikala has launched a new political party titled Amma Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (ADMK), a move widely viewed as a fresh challenge to T. T. V. Dhinakaran's Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (AMMK) ahead of the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections. The announcement was made in Ramanathapuram during a public event marking Jayalalithaa's birth anniversary. Signalling her formal political re-entry, Sasikala unveiled the party's flag bearing portraits of AIADMK founder M. G. Ramachandran, Jayalalithaa and former Chief Minister C. N. Annadurai. The imagery is being interpreted as an effort to firmly root the new outfit within the broader Dravidian political legacy.

Political analysts believe the party's name — closely resembling the original identity of the AIADMK — appears to be a calculated attempt to reconnect with Jayalalithaa's loyal support base and revive the powerful Amma brand in a politically fragmented environment. The abbreviation ADMK is also seen as symbolically significant, evoking familiarity among traditional AIADMK



voters. Sources suggest that Sasikala is preparing to field candidates in more than 20 constituencies, primarily concentrated in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu. These regions are known for the substantial electoral influence of the Mukkulathor community, comprising the Thevar, Kallar and Agamudayar groups. Her strategy is believed to focus on consolidating this key vote bank.

Under Rule 10B of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968, a registered but unrecognised party can seek a common election symbol if it contests at least five per cent of the total Assembly seats. In Tamil Nadu's 234-member Assembly, this requires contesting a minimum of 12 constituencies. By planning to field candidates in over 20 seats, Sasikala's party is expected to comfortably meet the eligibility criteria for a common symbol.

No fresh voters' inclusion application in 99 Assembly seats

KOLKATA

As the final voters' list in West Bengal as part of the ongoing Special Intensive Revision in the state was published, it showed that there has been no fresh voters' inclusion in as many as 99 Assembly constituencies during the entire SIR exercise starting from the beginning of the numeration phase in December last year till the publication of the final voters' list. The final voter list was published.

During this phase, there had been no Form-6 application (form for inclusion), as per statistics available from the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO).

This means that in almost 34 per cent of the total of 294 Assembly constituencies in the state, there has not been a single fresh voters' inclusion application. However, the sources in the CEO's office said that, given that there is still some time remaining for Form-6 applications to be submitted, the picture might be different at a later stage.

Applications for inclusion in the electoral roll can be submitted up to the last date for filing nomina-

tions for the upcoming Legislative Assembly election. Since polling dates for the forthcoming Assembly elections in West Bengal are yet to be announced, there is substantial time left from the last date of nomination, and hence voters seeking Form-6 applications have substantial time to submit Form-6 applications, the source said.

It is learnt that of the 99 Assembly constituencies where there has not been a single fresh voters' inclusion application during this period, the maximum has been in the case of the Bangladesh-bordering Nadia district, at 14.

The CEO's officer said that since the notification for the revision exercise was announced, the Election Commission has been regularly conducting awareness drives among voters about the significance of the different forms in the exercise.

But still, it seems some voters have ignored the awareness calls, which is evident from zero voters' inclusion applications in so many constituencies in this phase, the CEO's office insider said.

Priyanka blasts Centre over Wayanad landslide aid

WAYAND

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Lok Sabha MP from Wayanad and AICC General Secretary, criticised the Centre for being not very forthcoming in extending financial assistance to survivors of the July 2024 landslides, even as she welcomed the pace and quality of rehabilitation work in the district.

Addressing the media during her visit, the Congress leader said she was very happy to witness the progress on the ground and expressed satisfaction with the standard of housing being constructed for affected families. Looks to me like the quality of at least the house that I have seen is good.

Anything that is done for those who have survived such a terrible tragedy will make us all happy. I have no adverse comment, she said.

When asked whether the rehabilitation effort in Wayanad could serve as a model for the rest of the country, she refrained from drawing comparisons. Honestly, I haven't seen others, so I can't say, she remarked, while suggesting that more trees should be planted in the township area to enhance environmental sustainability and resilience. Highlighting the role of various stakeholders in the rebuilding process, Priyanka Gandhi observed that governments typically possess greater financial resources and



faster access to permits and clearances. Obviously, we are all making an effort, she said, adding that the Indian National Congress has committed to constructing 100 houses for survivors. The party recently

launched its housing initiative in the presence of Rahul Gandhi. She acknowledged that the party's housing project required time due to the need for statutory permissions and clearances.

'PLEDGE SUPPORT TO IRAN'

'Strong response will be given to Israel from Iran'

NEW DELHI

Maulana Yasoob Abbas, General Secretary of the All India Shia Personal Law Board, expressed shock and grief after reports emerged that Ali Khamenei, Supreme Leader of Iran, had been killed in joint US Israeli airstrikes.

Maulana Abbas said, "It is very sad news from Iran that Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has been killed in a joint Israeli US strike... The All India Shia Personal Law Board has announced three days of mourning. The US and Israel think they have destroyed Iran after this -- it is not true. A strong



response will be given to Israel from Iran."

He urged the community to wear black and said, "Tonight at 8.30 a jalsa will take place, and the effigies of America

and Israel will be burnt. I would request people to stand for those people in this difficult time. I urge our nation to support Iran fully."

There is a wave of grief

around the world over the martyrdom of Khamenei. After ending Khamenei, America and Israel think they have destroyed Iran, but let me tell you, neither Iran has been destroyed nor has Islam, he added.

The remarks come amid rapidly developing developments in the Middle East, where co-ordinated airstrikes by the US and Israel have targeted Iranian leadership and military infrastructure.

Iranian state media confirmed early Sunday that Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was killed in the joint US Israeli airstrikes, de-

claring 40 days of national mourning across the country. The airstrikes also killed several of his relatives, including his daughter, grandchild and son in law, according to reports citing Iranian outlets and international news agencies.

Earlier, US President Donald Trump announced on Truth Social that Khamenei had been killed, calling it the single greatest chance for Iranians to reclaim control of their country.

Trump described Khamenei as one of the most evil people in history and framed the strikes as justice for the people of Iran.

CHANGE OF NAME	CHANGE OF NAME
I, LAVEENA LOBO W/o RONALD LOBO, R/o 3-73/2, Bankeshwara Road, Yedthare, Byndoor, Kundapura, Udupi, Karnataka-576214, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as LAVEENA LOLETTE LOBO.	I, VENKAPPA HONNAPPA WADDAR S/o HONNAPPA WADAR, R/o No A-210, Vinyasas Virtue, 1st Main Road, Sharadamba Nagar, Jalahalli, Bangalore North, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560013, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as VENKATESH VORSE.
NAME CHANGE	CHANGE OF NAME
I, SUHAIL AHAMED MOHAMMED SALIM, S/o. Abdul Subhan, Resident No.5/1, New 11 C Street, HKP Road, Shivajinagar, Old Korchi Palaya, Bengaluru-560051, have changed my name to SUHAIL AHMED, vide affidavit dated: 02.03.2026 before Notary G. DAYANANDA, Bengaluru.	I, PANKAJ KUMAR HIMANSHU S/o AJAY KUMAR GUPTA R/o House No-177B/A, 4 th Cross Road, 3 rd Block, Vishwapriyanagar, Begur, Begur Main Road, Bangalore, Karnataka-560068, have changed the name of my minor son SHIVANSH GUPTA aged 8 years and he shall hereafter be known as ABBHINAV ADVIK GUPTA.

Govt. of Karnataka
Office of the Deputy Conservator of Forests Cauvery Wildlife Division, Kollegal

E-Mail: dcfc Cauveryw@gmail.com **Office:** 08224-253027

No. A2/BUD/Tender Publish/CR- 35/2025-26 Dated: 21.02.2026

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION

During the year 2025-26 tender has been called through kppp Portal to taken up the Excavation of Elephant Proof Trench in Muggur Wildlife Range of Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary, interested registered contractors can participate in the tender through kppp. Portal (<http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>) for further details can contact the under signed office in the office hours.

Deputy Conservator of Forests, Cauvery Wildlife Division Kollegal

NO: DIPR: CHANAGARI 750: 2025-26

QUICK READ



President Murmu to launch Delhi Lakhpati Bitiya Yojana

NEW DELHI

In a step towards the economic empowerment of women, President Droupadi Murmu, on Monday, will formally launch the Delhi government's 'Delhi Lakhpati Bitiya Yojana' and roll out the scheme for two free LPG cylinders on Holi and Diwali for 15 lakh poor families, an official said on Sunday. A special programme titled 'Sashakt Nari, Samridh Delhi' will be organised at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium on Monday during which these schemes, along with others will be launched by President Murmu, the official added. Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said that the programme symbolises the Delhi government's commitment to women's empowerment.

Gujarat to host SemiConnect as chip projects grow

GANDHINAGAR

Gujarat intensified its push to attract investment in semiconductor manufacturing as Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel held a series of one-to-one meetings with domestic and international industry leaders on the sidelines of the SemiConnect Conference-2026 in Gandhinagar. The two-day conference, organised by the state government's Department of Science and Technology under the theme Gujarat – India's Gateway to Silicon, was inaugurated by the Chief Minister at Mahatma Mandir. The event sought to promote strategic collaboration between global chipmakers and Indian industries.

Puducherry residents hail PM Modi's visit, initiatives

PUDUCHERRY

A wave of enthusiasm was witnessed in Puducherry following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit on Sunday, during which he inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for development projects worth Rs 2,700 crore, marking one of the largest infrastructure pushes for the Union Territory in recent years. Among attendees, many expressed optimism about the region's growth trajectory and praised the Prime Minister's initiatives. One attendee said, "The visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Puducherry has created a huge wave of enthusiasm."

Khamenei's killing immoral, unlawful: Owaisi

He urged the Indian govt to play a constructive role in de-escalating tensions

HYDERABAD

Asaduddin Owaisi, President of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), on Sunday termed the assassination of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as an immoral and unlawful act, strongly condemning the reported attacks on Iran by the United States and Israel.

The Hyderabad MP, speaking on behalf of his party, offered condolences to the Shia community, which regards Khamenei as its spiritual leader. He described the strikes as absolutely condemnable, particularly at a time when Iran-US talks were reportedly underway in Geneva. Referring to US President Donald Trump and Israeli

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Owaisi alleged that the two leaders had jointly attacked Iran without regard for the holy month of Ramzan. They did not even care that it's the holy month of Ramzan. Anyway, Benjamin Netanyahu does not even believe in humanity, Owaisi told the media. The AIMIM leader claimed that if a diplomatic breakthrough had been achieved in Geneva, Iran might have agreed not to use any nuclear stockpiles it possessed.

He further stated that more than 200 people had reportedly been killed in the attacks, including 108 girls who lost their lives when strikes allegedly hit a girls' school.

Demanding an immediate

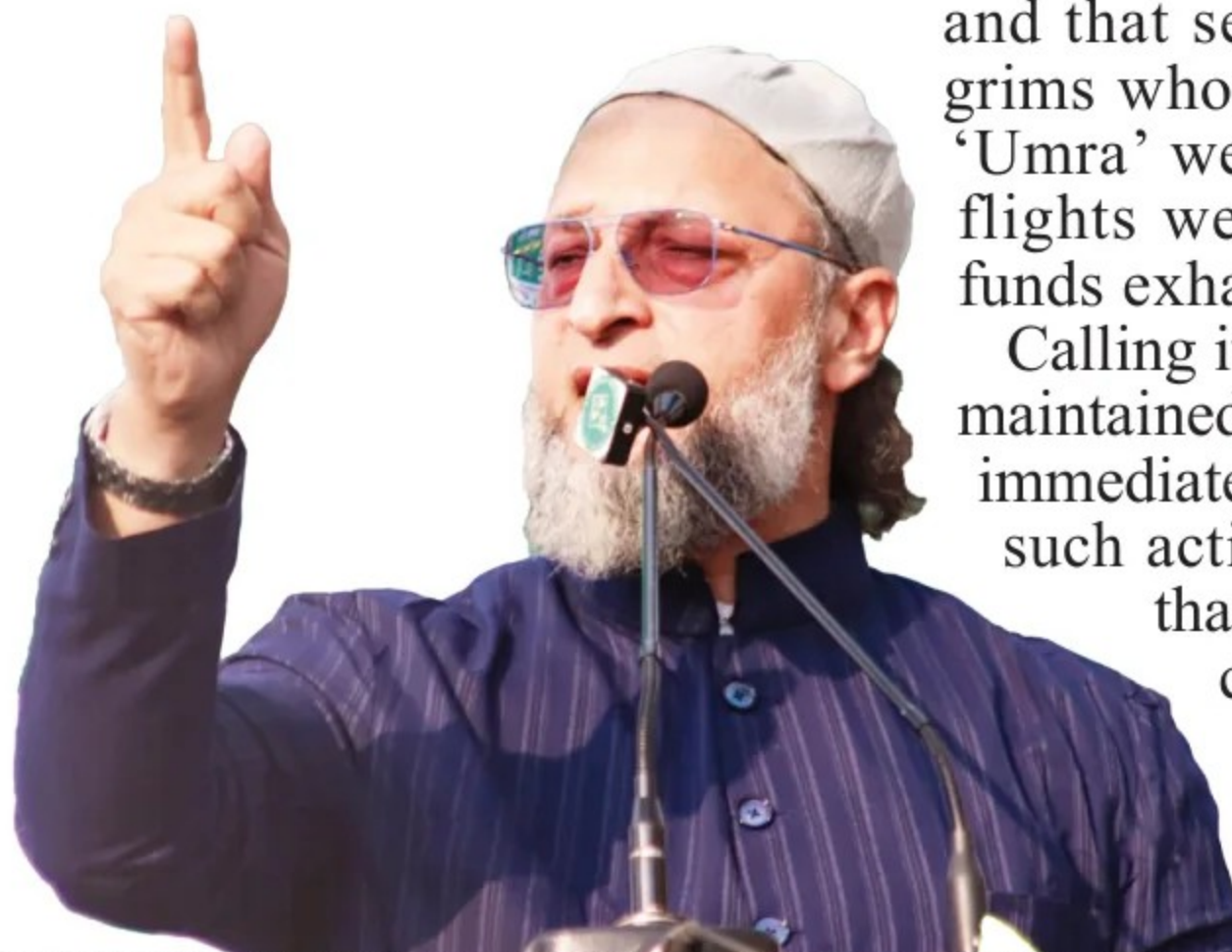
halt to hostilities, Owaisi warned that continued military action would destabilise the entire region.

These attacks on Iran should stop at the earliest, otherwise the whole region will be embroiled in instability, he said. He also urged India to play a proactive role in de-escalating the situa-

tion. Expressing hope that the present BJP-led government would condemn the assassination, he emphasised that nearly 10 million Indians work in Gulf countries and could be affected by prolonged conflict.

Owaisi further claimed that Indian workers were reportedly injured at Oman port and that several Indian pilgrims who had travelled for 'Umra' were stranded after flights were cancelled and funds exhausted.

Calling it an illegal war, he maintained that there was no immediate threat warranting such action and cautioned that failure to end the conflict could plunge the region into widespread turmoil.



Kejriwal claims vindication after court relief

NEW DELHI

Fresh from what he described as a morale-boosting reprieve in the liquor policy case, Arvind Kejriwal, National Convenor of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and former Delhi Chief Minister, on Sunday asserted that he is not corrupt and accused the BJP and the Congress of duping the nation.

Addressing a rally at Jantar Mantar, Kejriwal referred to a recent Delhi court order in the excise policy case, calling it a historic verdict delivered in favour of the people of Delhi and the country. The day before yesterday, a Delhi court gave a historic verdict — in favour of the people of Delhi, in favour of the people of the country. I want to congratulate the people of Delhi and the country for this historic decision, he said.

Praising the judiciary, he added that in what he termed a fearful atmosphere, the



judge had delivered a courageous verdict. Kejriwal said he could not tolerate cheating or treason against the country and maintained that he loved India, rejecting allegations of corruption against him.

Targeting the Indian National Congress, he recalled that the party was voted out of power in 2014 after a series of alleged scams, including the coal scam, 2G spectrum case and Commonwealth Games controversy. People had high hopes for the new government. But have you got anything from it? he asked, turn-

ing his attack toward the BJP-led government at the Centre.

The AAP chief alleged that in the past 12 years, the BJP government had weakened key sectors, claiming that infrastructure, aviation, railways, banking, education and health were in poor condition. He also alleged the existence of a Rs 20,000 crore drugs racket in Gujarat and challenged BJP leaders to take action.

Kejriwal further claimed that Delhi residents had suffered over the past four years due to what he described as conspiracies by the BJP. Referring to allegations that he misappropriated Rs 100 crore, he said there was no proof to substantiate such claims.

He asserted that the court's verdict had exposed what he termed as falsehoods by his political opponents and declared that it had established his honesty, as party workers from multiple states gathered in support at the rally.

Shias Protest in Kashmir after Khamenei's Reported Killing

SRINAGAR

Shia Muslims staged protests across parts of Kashmir on Sunday following reports of the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in a joint US-Israel strike.

A large gathering assembled at Ghanta Ghar in Srinagar, where demonstrators held posters of Khamenei, waved Iranian flags and raised banners as they chanted pro-Islamic, anti-US and anti-Israel slogans. Similar protests were reported from Shia-majority localities in Budgam and other areas of the Valley.

Khamenei, who had visited Srinagar in the 1980s, was widely revered among sections of the Shia community in Kashmir. Iranian state media reported that several members of his family were also killed in the strike.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed concern over the developments and appealed for calm. He urged authorities to allow people to grieve peacefully and called on police to exercise restraint.

"We must ensure that those mourning in Jammu and Kashmir are allowed to grieve peacefully," he said, adding that the government is coordinating with the Ministry of External Affairs to ensure the safety of residents, including students in Iran. The All J&K Shia Association issued a statement mourning the deaths and expressing solidarity with the people of Iran. Meanwhile, PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti condemned the strike.



hearts of children, parents, and the coaches, she said.

Airport authorities have increased coordination efforts amid the evolving geopolitical situation, while airlines are issuing advisories to passengers regarding possible rescheduling or alternative arrangements.

Many affected travellers at Mumbai airport voiced concern over the uncertainty surrounding their travel plans as tensions in the region continue to impact international air routes.

Cong treated Puducherry as ATM to serve one family in Delhi: Modi

PUDUCHERRY

Narendra Modi on Sunday intensified his political attack on the Indian National Congress, alleging that the party had treated Puducherry as an ATM to serve only one family in Delhi and asserting that the Union Territory would never vote for it and its allies again.

Addressing a public meeting, the Prime Minister accused the Congress–DMK combine of obstructing development and presiding over corruption and administrative decline.

He alleged that governance deteriorated during the Congress and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) regime, claiming that corruption flourished and crime increased while welfare mechanisms weakened, adversely impacting the poor.

The people of Puducherry suffered greatly during Congress and DMK rule, he said.

Referring to the public distribution system, Modi alleged that families faced severe hardship in accessing essential commodities. There were times when ration shops did not have rice. Congress treated Puducherry like its own ATM, he charged, drawing applause from party supporters present at the rally.

The Prime Minister also extended his criticism to the DMK's governance in neigh-



bouring Tamil Nadu, alleging that the party's political culture was marked by corruption and deception. He claimed that both Congress and the DMK had consistently acted as obstacles to Puducherry's growth and development aspirations.

Whenever Puducherry tries to accelerate its development, Congress and DMK put up roadblocks.

They have functioned as speed breakers in the journey of progress, he said.

Framing the political contest as a choice between what he described as failed past governance and a future driven by development, Modi urged voters to carefully assess

the track record of parties seeking another term in power.

Those who once neglected Puducherry are asking for another chance.

The people must remember their past performance, he remarked, calling on citizens to support what he termed a development-oriented agenda for the Union Territory.

'During the Cong-DMK regime, corruption flourished and crime increased while welfare mechanisms weakened, adversely impacting the poor'

'Targeted Assassination Deserves Strong Condemnation': Priyanka on Khamenei Killing

NEW DELHI

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday strongly condemned the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, describing it as a "targeted assassination" that warrants unequivocal global condemnation.

In a post on X, the Congress general secretary criticised the United States and Israel over the airstrikes that reportedly killed the 86-year-old cleric in Tehran. She termed the action "despicable" and said such acts by the "so-called leaders of the democratic world" undermine international norms and sovereignty.

"The targeted assassination of the leadership of a sovereign nation... deserves strong condemnation, no matter what the proclaimed reason for it

is," she wrote, adding that the world needs peace, "not more unnecessary wars." Taking a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Priyanka said she hoped that having "genuflected" before Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Donald Trump, he would ensure the safe evacuation of all Indian citizens from affected regions. Her remarks came amid escalating tensions in West Asia following coordinated strikes by the US and Israel on Iran. Iran's state media reported that Khamenei was killed in an airstrike targeting his compound in central Tehran, triggering fears of wider regional conflict. The Congress party also criticised the Centre's foreign policy approach, alleging that India is paying a "heavy price" for both its substance and style.

Written test for recruiting Group-C workers of WBSSC held

KOLKATA

After a long wait, the written examination for the recruitment of Group-C workers of the West Bengal School Service Commission (WBSSC) was held in the state on Sunday, amidst tight security arrangements.

With the publication of the final voters' list after Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process and the arrival of central paramilitary forces in the state, the WBSSC took extra precautions regarding the security and administrative management of the examination centres.

Although there was a possibility of deployment of paramilitary forces in schools and colleges for purpose of upcoming Assembly elections, special instructions were given to the administration to ensure that there was no presence of central forces

in the examination centres on the day of the written exam.

According to WBSSC sources, the Group-C exam was conducted at 1,693 centres across the state on Sunday.

About 8,04,000 candidates had applied for this exam for 2,989 vacancies.

On the other hand, the Group-D recruitment exam will be held on March 8. About 8,09,000 applications were received for the Group-D exam. The total number of exam centres for both Group-C and Group-D was about 3,400.

For the sake of safety, several restrictions were issued for the candidates.

Boots or closed shoes were not allowed. Only students with slippers or Hawaiian sandals were allowed.

Carrying any electronic gadgets including mobile phones, calculators, jewel-

lery or additional items was prohibited. Only the admit card, clear water bottle and pen were allowed.

Today, Group-C candidates entered the examination centre from 10 a.m. as per rules. Candidates were asked to reach the centre by 10 a.m. and no one was allowed to enter after 11.45 a.m. The total marks for Group-C examination are 60 and the examination concluded at 1:50 pm.

Candidates from outside states also appeared for the Group-C exam. The SSC had sent a letter to the state's DGP and Kolkata Police Commissioner regarding today's exam.

On Saturday, School Service Commission Chairman Siddhartha Majumdar said, All preparations for the exam have been completed and strict security measures have been put in place.

'SASHAKT NARI, SAMRIDDH DELHI'

Delhi to launch pink NCMC for women

NEW DELHI

Inspired by the Centre's 'One Nation, One Card' initiative, the Rekha Gupta-led Delhi government is set to roll out the National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) for women, with Droupadi Murmu scheduled to formally launch the facility on Monday, an official said.

The 'Pink Card' scheme will be unveiled at a programme titled 'Sashakt Nari, Samridh Delhi' at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said. On the occasion, selected eligible women beneficiaries will be presented with the Pink NCMC cards.

The Chief Minister described the initiative as a major reform aimed at building a modern, digital and inclusive public transport system in the national capital.

Under the scheme, the Pink Card will provide free travel to eligible women residents on buses operated by the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC). In addition, the card will allow seamless paid access to the Delhi Metro, the Regional Rapid Transit System (RTS), and other public transport services through a single smart card platform.

Chief Minister Gupta said the initiative marks an important step toward making public transport more accessible, safe



er and digitally enabled. By reducing daily commuting expenses, the scheme is expected to enhance women's access to education, employment, healthcare and other social opportunities.

She further announced that three types of NCMC cards will be issued under the pro-

QUICK READ

CBSE postpones Class 10, 12 Board exams in Middle East

CBSE Board Exams Postponed:

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has postponed the Class 10 and 12 board examinations scheduled for March 2, 2026, in the Middle East due to the prevailing situation in the region. The board said that fresh dates will be announced later. "The examinations scheduled for March 2 for both Class 10 and Class 12, are postponed. The new dates shall be announced later," the official notice stated. The exams have been postponed in several Middle Eastern countries, including Bahrain, Iran, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. The board will review the situation again on March 3 and take a decision regarding the examinations scheduled from March 5, 2026, onwards. "The Board will review the situation on Tuesday, 03 March 2026, and take appropriate decisions with regard to examinations scheduled from 05 March onwards," the notice added.

UAE warns Iran, asks it to behave responsibly with neighbours

Abu Dhabi
The United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Sunday advised Iran to return to its senses and deal with its neighbouring nations with reason and responsibility before the circle of isolation and escalation widens. Anwar Gargash, senior diplomatic advisor to UAE President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, stated that Iran's attack against the Gulf states missed its target and has isolated Tehran at this critical moment. Gargash stressed that Iran's actions confirm the narrative of those who consider Iran as the primary source of danger, and its missile program as a perpetual threat to instability. Iran's aggression against the Gulf states missed its target and isolated Iran at its critical moment.

Avoid unnecessary travel: Indian Embassy in Lebanon

BEIRUT
Amid ongoing tensions in the Middle Eastern region, the Indian Embassy in Lebanon has advised all Indian nationals to avoid unnecessary travel, remain vigilant and observe locally advised safety and emergency procedures. The embassy asked Indian nationals in Lebanon to contact it on its mobile number or through email in case of any emergency. In the advisory issued on Sunday, the Indian Embassy said: In view of the current situation in the region, all Indian nationals in Lebanon are advised to avoid unnecessary travel, remain vigilant and observe locally advised safety and emergency procedures.

SU DO KU

Brain-Bender: Can You Solve It?

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Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle



ISRAEL RENEWS STRIKES ON TEHRAN

Israel expands military offensive as Iran vows to avenge the death of its decades-long leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in US-Israeli strikes

JERUSALEM
Israel's military announced on Sunday that it had launched a broad wave of air strikes deep inside Tehran, marking a dramatic escalation in the ongoing conflict with Iran. The offensive came hours after the United States and Israel stated that an earlier air strike had killed Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, triggering fears of widespread instability across the Middle East. According to Israeli military officials, the air force conducted large-scale operations over the past 24 hours aimed at opening what it described as the path to Tehran. The strikes reportedly targeted strategic and military infrastructure in and around the Iranian capital. The Israeli military characterized the campaign as a decisive step in its broader objective to weaken and potentially overthrow the government of the Islamic Republic. Iran's state media confirmed the death of 86-year-old Ayatollah Ali Khamenei following the air strike. Khamenei, who had served as Iran's Supreme Leader since 1989, held ultimate authority



in the country's political and military hierarchy. As Supreme Leader, he acted as commander-in-chief of the armed forces and had the final say on key matters of state, including foreign policy, which has long been defined by confrontation with the United States and Israel. Under Iran's constitution, the Supreme Leader is appointed by the Assembly of Experts, an 88-member clerical body responsible for supervising and, in theory, dismissing the country's highest authority. In the wake of Khamenei's death, his adviser and top security official, Ali Larijani, announced that a temporary leadership council would be established in accordance with constitutional provisions until a new leader is selected. Two U.S. sources and a U.S. official familiar with the matter revealed that Israel and the United States had coordinated the timing of Saturday's strike to coincide with a high-level meeting Khamenei was holding with senior aides. The targeted attack and subsequent strikes on Tehran have significantly heightened tensions in the region, raising concerns of broader military confrontation and political upheaval across the Middle East.

Iran's retaliatory strikes rock Gulf cities for second day

DUBAI
Loud explosions were reported for a second consecutive day in Dubai and Qatar's capital Doha on Sunday, while Oman was struck for the first time, as retaliatory attacks linked to the widening conflict between Iran, the United States and Israel spread across the Gulf region. The developments have intensified fears of a broader regional war and significant disruption to global trade and travel. Iran had previously warned that it would target U.S. military bases in the region following joint U.S.-Israeli strikes on the Islamic Republic. However, the latest wave of attacks has affected a broader range of sites across major Gulf cities, causing damage to key infrastructure and commercial hubs. In Dubai, damage was reported at several prominent landmarks and facilities, including Dubai International Airport, the iconic Burj Al



Arab hotel, and the man-made Palm Jumeirah Island. Thick black plumes of smoke continued to rise from the Jebel Ali port area, one of the busiest ports in the Middle East. Authorities said one of the berths caught fire on Sunday after debris from an intercepted missile fell into the area, igniting flames and prompting emergency response operations. Dubai, the region's leading tourism and trade hub, hosts one of the world's busiest airports, making any disruption a matter of international concern. Officials have not yet provided a full assessment of the extent of the structural damage or potential impact on commercial flights and shipping operations.

In neighbouring Oman, which had been spared during the initial phase of retaliatory strikes, the Duqm commercial port was targeted by two drones. According to the state news agency, one worker was wounded in the attack. Omani authorities are assessing the damage and strengthening security around key infrastructure sites. Meanwhile, Qatar's interior ministry confirmed it was responding to a limited fire in an industrial zone in Doha after debris from an intercepted missile fell into the area. Emergency services were deployed promptly, and officials described the situation as under control. The expanding scope of the strikes underscores the increasing volatility in the Gulf, with major economic and logistical centers now caught in the crossfire. Regional governments remain on high alert as tensions continue to mount.

Deadly protests erupt in Karachi, Baghdad after Khamenei's death

KARACHI
At least nine protesters were killed in Pakistan's largest city, Karachi, after crowds breached the outer wall of the U.S. consulate following reports of U.S. and Israeli air strikes that killed Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The unrest underscores the widening regional fallout from the escalating confrontation involving Iran, the United States and Israel. According to local authorities, demonstrators gathered outside the U.S. Consulate in Karachi shortly after news spread of Khamenei's death. Protesters reportedly set a vehicle ablaze outside the main gate and clashed with police forces deployed to secure the compound. A



spokesman for the local government said security personnel managed to push the crowd back from the consulate premises. Police confirmed that at least nine people were killed during the chaos, though it was not immediately clear how the fatalities occurred. Reuters reporters at the scene said they heard gunfire and witnessed police firing tear gas to disperse the crowds in surrounding streets. Video footage circulating online showed protesters holding portraits of Khamenei and chanting Death to America before clashes intensified. Inside the compound, a diplomat told reporters, "We're safe, indicating that staff members were secure despite the violence outside. The U.S. Consulate in Karachi and the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad did not immediately respond to requests for official comment. Meanwhile, unrest also flared in neighbouring Iraq. In the capital, Baghdad,

Iraqi police fired tear gas and stun grenades to disperse hundreds of pro-Iranian demonstrators who had gathered outside the heavily fortified Green Zone, home to the U.S. Embassy. Protesters chanted Death to Israel, death to America as they confronted security forces. Pakistan and Iraq, which have the largest Shi'ite Muslim populations after Iran, have witnessed heightened tensions as anger over Khamenei's killing reverberates across the region. The protests signal growing instability beyond Iran's borders, raising concerns about the security of diplomatic missions and the potential for further escalation in already volatile conditions.

Afghan fires at Pak jets as Kabul rocked by blasts

KABUL
Afghanistan said it fired at Pakistani jets over the capital, Kabul, early Sunday after explosions and gunfire shook the city, deepening instability in a region already unsettled by US-Israeli strikes on Iran and retaliatory attacks across Gulf states. According to a Reuters witness, multiple explosions echoed across parts of Kabul before sunrise, followed by sustained bursts of gunfire. The exact targets were not immediately clear, and there was no confirmation of casualties at the time of reporting. Residents reported panic as air defence systems appeared to activate in response to aerial activity over the city. The Taliban administration's spokesperson, Zabihullah Mujahid, said Afghan forces had launched air defence attacks against Pakistani aircraft flying over the capital. Air defence attacks were carried out in Kabul against Pakistani aircraft. Kabul residents should not be concerned, Mujahid said in a statement, seeking to reassure citizens amid rising tensions. The incident follows a week of escalating hostilities between Afghanistan's Taliban-led government and Pakistan. Islamabad has conducted strikes against what it describes as militant targets inside Afghanistan, accusing Kabul of harbouring insurgent groups responsible for cross-border attacks, alleging



tions the Taliban authorities strongly deny. The renewed confrontation marks some of the heaviest fighting between the two neighbours in years, raising fears of a prolonged conflict along their 2,600-kilometre (1,615-mile) shared border. The deteriorating security situation has prompted concern from regional powers. Count-

Pre-dawn explosions in Kabul heighten fears of prolonged Afghanistan-Pakistan conflict.

tries including Qatar and Saudi Arabia have called for restraint and expressed willingness to mediate efforts toward a ceasefire. The latest developments come at a time of broader regional volatility, with tensions already high due to military actions involving Iran, the United States and Israel. Analysts warn that simultaneous flashpoints across the region risk creating a wider and more unpredictable security crisis, particularly if border clashes between Afghanistan and Pakistan intensify further.

‘Cardinal found with phone during secret conclave’

VATICAN
A secret conclave that elected Pope Leo XIV as head of the Catholic Church last May was briefly interrupted after one of the 133 participating cardinals was found carrying a cell-phone inside the voting chamber, according to a new book released on Sunday. The incident has been described as a major security breach during one of the most secretive processes in the Vatican. The revelation appears in The Election of Pope Leo XIV, written by veteran Vatican correspondents Gerard O'Connell and Elisabetta



Pique. The authors detail how, as the cardinals gathered inside the Sistine Chapel to cast their first vote, security officials detected an active mobile signal despite sophisticated jamming systems installed to block all outside communications. According to the book, the

unexpected signal caused visible alarm among the assembled clerics. The cardinals reportedly looked at one another in disbelief before an elderly member of the College of Cardinals realized he had inadvertently kept a mobile phone in his pocket. He immediately surrendered the device. The authors state there is no indication the cardinal had any improper motive, describing him as disoriented and distressed by the discovery. Papal conclaves are conducted under strict secrecy, with participants required to surrender all electronic devices before entering the sealed

environment. The integrity of the process is considered essential to safeguarding the independence of the Church's highest decision-making event. O'Connell and Pique described the episode as unimaginable even for a film and never before seen in the history of modern conclaves. The scene drew comparisons to the 2024 film Conclave, which dramatized fictional intrigue during a papal election. Yet, the authors suggest that the real-life discovery of a phone inside the Sistine Chapel was, in its own way, more startling than any cinematic portrayal.



IRAN CONFLICT: Women Wrestlers Stranded in Albania, Sindhu Held in Dubai

US-Israel strikes on Iran trigger global travel chaos for athletes

KOLKATA

The escalating conflict following US-Israel strikes on Iran has disrupted international air travel, leaving Indian women wrestlers stranded in Tirana, Albania, after their return flight via Dubai was cancelled. The team had travelled to compete in the second Ranking Series event, which commenced on February 25. While the men's freestyle team returned to India after completing their campaign, the women's squad now faces uncertainty amid the global crisis.

A 16-member women's wrestling squad, along with support staff, is currently stranded in Tirana, Albania, after their return flight via Dubai was cancelled. The team had travelled to compete in the second Ranking Series event, which commenced on February 25. While the men's freestyle team returned to India after completing their campaign, the women's squad now faces uncertainty amid the global crisis.

"We were scheduled to fly out at 1 PM local time from Tirana, but the flight has been cancelled as it was via Dubai," a member of the coaching staff said. He added that the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) is working on alternative arrangements to bring the contingent home safely.

The wrestlers are staying at



the team hotel but were required to vacate their rooms by 11 AM on Sunday, raising logistical concerns. Sources in the WFI confirmed that the Sports Authority of India has been informed and requested to coordinate with the Indian Embassy in Albania for assistance. If flight arrangements are delayed, the contingent may have to shift to another hotel.

Despite the turmoil, the Indian women delivered a commendable performance, clinching three silver and two bronze medals. Priyanshi Prapatt (50kg), Meenakshi (53kg) and Neha (57kg) se-

cured silver medals, while Muskan (50kg) and Savita (62kg) won bronze. Earlier, Sajeet Kalkal bagged gold in the 65kg category.

Meanwhile, two-time Olympic medalist Sindhu was stranded at Dubai Airport en route to Birmingham for the prestigious All England Open. She revealed on social media that an explosion occurred near their location at the airport, causing panic. Sindhu later confirmed that she and her team were safely moved to a secure area, thanking airport authorities and the Indian High Commission in Dubai for their swift support.

A Double Honour for Diana Edulji at Wankhede

MUMBAI

The Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) has honoured one of India's pioneering women cricketers by naming a gate at Wankhede Stadium after Diana Edulji, a tribute she calls a "double honour."

As part of an initiative to recognise cricketers, the MCA dedicated stands and gates to legends including Ravi Shastri, Dilip Sardesai, Eknath Solkar and Edulji. The Level 1 stand below the press box now bears Shastri's name, while Gate No. 5 on the railway bridge is named after Edulji.

Edulji said the gesture celebrates both her cricketing journey and her long association with Railway Sports. Raised in a railway colony, she began playing with a tennis ball before rising to represent Railways and captain the Indian women's team. A slow left-arm orthodox bowler, she became one of women's cricket's most accomplished figures.

MCA officials noted space constraints influenced the gate placements. For Edulji, the honour marks a full-circle journey at Mumbai's iconic cricket venue.



T20 WC 2026: Pak Exit Despite Thrilling Win; NZ Reach Semis

PALLEKELE

Pakistan were knocked out of the T20 World Cup 2026 despite a narrow five-run victory over Sri Lanka in their Super Eights clash, as New Zealand national cricket team advanced to the semifinals on superior net run rate.

Asked to bat first, Pakistan posted a daunting 212 for 8 in their 20 overs. Sahibzada Farhan delivered a scintillating knock of 100, anchoring the innings with authority, while his opening partner Fakhar Zaman smashed 84 in a blistering display. The duo laid a solid foundation, propelling Pakistan to one of their highest totals in the tournament.

However, the equation was clear — Pakistan needed to restrict Sri Lanka to 147 or below to overhaul New Zealand's net run rate and seal a semifinal berth from Group 2. Despite a spirited bowling effort, they fell short of that target.



Farhan century in vain as net run rate ends hopes

Sri Lanka, already out of semifinal contention, mounted a strong chase and finished at 207 for 6. Captain Dasun Shanaka led from the front with an explosive unbeaten 76 off just 31 deliveries, while Pavan Rathnayake contributed a steady 58 to keep the hosts in the hunt till the final over.

For Pakistan, leg-spinner Abrar Ahmed emerged as the standout bowler, claiming three wickets for 23 runs.

Though Pakistan managed to defend the total and secure victory by five runs, the margin was insufficient to tilt the net run rate equation in their favour.

Both Pakistan and New Zealand concluded the Super Eights stage with three points each. However, New Zealand progressed as the second-placed team owing to their superior net run rate, joining group leaders England cricket team in the semifinals after England won all three of their Super Eights fixtures.

Lovlina, Nikhat to Spearhead India's Campaign at Asian Boxing Championships

NEW DELHI

Lovlina Borgohain and Nikhat Zareen will lead a strong 20-member Indian contingent at the upcoming Asian Boxing Championships in Mongolia, where qualification spots for the Commonwealth and Asian Games will also be at stake.

The continental showpiece is scheduled to be held from March 28 to April 11 and assumes added importance this year, with finalists in approved weight categories earning direct berths for the multi-sport events later in the season, as per the Boxing Federation of India's selection policy.

Lovlina, a former world champion and Olympic medalist, will compete in the 75kg category and is considered one of the favourites for the title. Nikhat, a multiple-time world champion, will represent India in the 51kg division, bolstering the women's squad with her experience and pedigree.

The team was finalised after a rigorous month-long



evaluation process that took into account performances at the National Championships in January and the ongoing national camp in Patiala. Among the women, Preeti Pawar (54kg), Arundhati Choudhary (70kg) and Priya (60kg) — all medalists at the recent Boxam Elite International in Spain — have also been named, strengthening India's medal prospects.

In the men's section, Sachin Siwach (60kg), a gold medalist at the World Boxing Cup Finals and Boxam International, will be one of India's strongest contenders. He will be joined by Vishwanath

Suresh (50kg), Jadumani Singh (55kg), Aditya Pratap Yadav (65kg), Deepak (70kg), Akash (75kg), Ankush (80kg), Lokesh (85kg), Harsh Choudhary (90kg) and Narendar (90+kg).

The women's line-up also features Minakshi Hooda (48kg), Jaismine Lamboriya (57kg), Ankushita Boro (65kg), Pooja Rani (80kg) and Alfiya Pathan (80+kg).

With a blend of seasoned champions and emerging talent, India will aim for a dominant performance in Mongolia and secure crucial qualification spots ahead of a packed international calendar.

Bezzecchi Wins Thailand MotoGP as Marquez Suffers Late Retirement

BURIRAM

Marco Bezzecchi fired the opening salvo of the 2026 season with a commanding victory at the Thailand Grand Prix, while defending champion Marc Marquez endured heartbreak after retiring late due to a mechanical issue.

Riding for Aprilia Racing, Bezzecchi converted pole position into a flawless lights-to-flag triumph at the Chang International Circuit in Buriram. The Italian, who had crashed out while leading Saturday's sprint race, made amends in emphatic style, storming into an early lead and steadily building a gap over the chasing pack.

He eventually crossed the finish line more than five seconds clear, sealing his third consecutive Grand Prix victory dating back to last season. KTM's Pedro Acosta secured second place with a composed ride, while Raul Fernandez of Trackhouse Racing completed the podium in third.

Marquez's race unravelled in the closing stages when a buckled wheel forced him to retire, deny-

ing him valuable early championship points. It was a disappointing start for the reigning champion, who had shown competitive pace throughout the weekend.

Elsewhere, 2024 world champion Jorge Martin finished fourth as he continues his comeback from an injury-hit campaign last year. Trackhouse's Ai Ogura claimed fifth, followed by VR46's Fabio Di Giannantonio and KTM's Brad Binder. Alex Marquez crashed out late in the race, while two-time world champion Francesco Bagnaia recovered from 13th on the grid to finish ninth.

Reflecting on his performance, Bezzecchi said, "Yesterday was a small mistake with a big consequence, so it was important today to bounce back. My pace with the medium tyre was strong all weekend, and I knew I could be fast if I stayed in front."

The FIM MotoGP World Championship now heads to Brazil for the second round of the season on March 22, with Bezzecchi carrying early momentum in the title race.



Historic title validates decades of belief, resilience and untapped talent

Maiden Ranji Triumph Will Inspire Generations, Says Proud Rasool



HUBBALLI

Jammu & Kashmir's landmark Ranji Trophy triumph is more than a cricketing achievement — it is a moment of validation, pride and inspiration, said former captain Parvez Rasool after the team scripted history with its maiden title.

For Rasool and former skipper Samiullah Beigh, who carried the region's cricketing hopes long before the recent surge, the victory marked the culmination of years of faith in local talent. Rasool, the first cricketer from Jammu & Kashmir to represent India, described the win as an emotional milestone.

"Whoever has contributed to J&K cricket, it is a happy occasion for all of them," Rasool said. "We are lifting this trophy after 67 years since our first Ranji campaign. This win will inspire generations to come."

Beigh, who featured in 61 First-Class matches, echoed similar sentiments. He recalled how belief in the region's cricketers remained steadfast even when infrastructure lagged behind. "We always had talent. What we didn't have was the infrastructure to back it," Beigh said. "A decade ago, when I spoke about

how J&K's fortunes would change if facilities improved, people thought I was bragging. But we saw the hunger and ability every day."

The breakthrough season, many believe, reflects the transformation brought about by improved support systems, coaching and exposure. Former India and Karnataka off-spinner Sunil Joshi, who coached the side in 2014-15, said the seeds of success were sown years ago. "Even then, we had a strong pace attack capable of bowling long spells due to their exceptional stamina," Joshi recalled. "They didn't need outside talent because they had plenty in their backyard. What they required was technical guidance and mentorship."

Joshi credited current coach Ajay Sharma for channelising the players' hunger effectively, while Paras Dogra's experience added maturity to the squad. The team's celebratory jig on the field symbolised more than a title — it marked the arrival of Jammu & Kashmir as a cricketing force. For Rasool and countless young aspirants watching, the victory stands as proof that belief, backed by opportunity, can transform dreams into enduring legacy.

World Cup 2026 Nears as 100-Day Countdown Begins Amid Global Tensions

LOS ANGELES

The 100-day countdown to the 2026 FIFA World Cup begins this week, with the expanded tournament promising record-breaking scale and revenues even as geopolitical tensions and domestic political challenges cast a shadow over preparations.

For the first time, 48 teams will compete — up from 32 in 2022 — across the United States, Canada and Mexico in a tri-nation spectacle. The tournament will kick off on June 11 at the Estadio Azteca in Mexico City and culminate on July 19 at MetLife Stadium.

A total of 104 matches will be played across 16 venues and four time zones, with the United States hosting 78 games. Gianni Infantino has described the tournament's magnitude as equivalent to "104 Super Bowls," forecasting record revenues of \$11 billion — comfortably surpassing the \$7 billion generated in Qatar in 2022.

Infantino has cited more than 508 million ticket requests for approximately seven million seats as evidence of unprecedented demand. However, FIFA's pricing policy has drawn criticism

from fan organisations such as Football Supporters Europe, which labelled it a "monumental betrayal." FIFA has since introduced a limited tranche of \$60 tickets for official supporters' groups.

Beyond commercial projections, political complexities loom large. Trade tensions involving co-hosts Canada and Mexico, immigration crackdowns in the United States and visa uncertainties for fans from nations including Iran, Haiti, Senegal and Ivory Coast have triggered anxiety. Meanwhile, recent unrest in Guadalajara following anti-drug operations has added to logistical concerns in Mexico.

On the pitch, defending champions Argentina national football team will once again rely on Lionel Messi, who turns 39 during what is expected to be his final World Cup. Former champions France and European titleholders Spain are among the favourites, while England — now coached by Thomas Tuchel — seek to end a 60-year major trophy drought. As the countdown gathers pace, the world's biggest sporting carnival stands poised between spectacle and uncertainty.



FIH Pro League | Amateur Display in a Pro League

BENGALURU

The Indian men's hockey team's campaign in the FIH Pro League has raised serious concerns, with a string of underwhelming performances exposing structural flaws, fitness issues and a worrying lack of killer instinct ahead of a packed international season.

With only one third-place finish in the 2021-22 edition as their best result, India's record in the nine-team FIH Pro League has never been partic-

ularly impressive. However, after finishing eighth last year under coach Craig Fulton, there was hope that lessons had been learnt. Instead, the seventh edition has mirrored — if not worsened — past struggles.

India's eight matches in the first leg yielded five losses, no outright wins and three draws (two shootout defeats and one shootout win), leaving them with just four points and languishing in eighth place, only above Pakistan

men's national field hockey team at the halfway mark.

The numbers are stark. India have scored just nine goals — the lowest among all teams — while conceding 25. The 0-8 thrashing by Argentina men's national field hockey team stands out as a low point. Equally alarming are the 21 penalty corners earned compared to 67 conceded and consistently inferior circle penetration statistics across matches against Belgium, Argentina, Spain and Australia.



Former Olympic gold medal-winning captain Vasudevan

Baskaran did not mince words. "Lack of killer in-

stinct" and "elementary mistakes" have hurt the side, he said, questioning both fitness levels and professionalism. He also pointed to defensive frailties in a team that prides itself on structure.

Former international Sandeep Somesh echoed similar concerns, highlighting poor transitions from defence to attack and inadequate work rate among forwards. "Without high intensity and coordinated pressing, space creation becomes impossible," he ob-

served.

Fulton, however, has maintained that experimentation with younger players is part of long-term planning, especially with the World Cup and Asian Games scheduled close together later this year.

Despite the setbacks, optimism lingers. As Baskaran summed up, with better planning, rest and cohesion, the team can still regroup. For Indian hockey fans, hope remains — even if the ride promises to be turbulent.

QUICK READ

TCS' market cap falls over Rs 18,000 crore last week

Mumbai

The market capitalisation of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) dropped by Rs 18,180.89 crore last week, bringing its total valuation down to Rs 9,53,872.59 crore, as equity markets remained under pressure. Overall, nine of the top-10 most valued companies together lost Rs 2,18,902.09 crore in market valuation during the week, reflecting a bearish trend in the stock market. The BSE benchmark index declined sharply by 1,527.52 points, or 1.84 per cent, over the same period. According to Ajit Mishra, SVP, Research at Religare Broking Limited, equity markets ended the week under notable pressure due to persistent geopolitical tensions and weakness in technology stocks, which hurt overall investor sentiment.

Tata Motors sales jump 32% in Feb on strong truck demand

New Delhi

Tata Motors Limited on Sunday reported a sharp 32 per cent year-on-year (YoY) rise in total sales for February 2026. The company sold 42,940 vehicles in domestic and international markets during the month, compared to 32,533 units in February 2025. Domestic sales stood at 40,893 units, marking a strong growth of 32.8 per cent from 30,797 units in the same month last year. The company's international business also showed steady improvement, with sales rising 17.9 per cent to 2,047 units from 1,736 units a year ago. The growth was led by strong performance across various truck and commercial vehicle categories.

FPIs pump Rs 22,615 cr into Indian equities in Feb, highest in 17 months

Mumbai

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) made a strong comeback to Indian equities in February, investing Rs 22,615 crore. This marks the highest monthly inflow in the past 17 months and comes after three straight months of heavy selling. The fresh buying was supported by positive developments such as the interim India-US trade deal, correction in domestic market valuations and strong third-quarter corporate earnings. The renewed confidence helped reverse the recent trend of outflows. According to data from the depositories, FPIs had pulled out Rs 35,962 crore in January, Rs 22,611 crore in December and Rs 3,765 crore in November.

Hyundai India clocks 12.6% jump in February sales

NEW DELHI

Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL) on Sunday reported a 12.6% year-on-year rise in total sales to 66,134 units in February 2026, marking its highest-ever February performance in India. Domestic sales increased 9.8% to 52,407 units, while exports surged 24.8% to 13,727 units. The strong combined performance resulted in Hyundai's best-ever February for both total and domestic sales. Managing Director and CEO Tarun Garg said the company has carried forward January's record-breaking momentum into February, sustaining its growth trajectory

ADANI-OPERATED HAIFA PORT REMAINS SECURE AMID US-IRAN CONFLICT

The port operator says it's closely monitoring the situation and is coordinating with Israel's Ministry of Transport and Road Safety

AHMEDABAD

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Limited (APSEZ) on Sunday said that operations at Israel's Haifa Port remain normal and all employees are safe amid the ongoing tensions in the region.

In an official statement, APSEZ said that the Haifa Port Company has confirmed that all its staff members are safe and that port assets and infrastructure are fully secure and operational. The company emphasised that there has been no disruption to port activities despite the prevailing situation.

Haifa Port Company confirms that all its employees are safe, and all port assets and infrastructure are fully secure and in operational condition, APSEZ said in its statement, reassuring stakeholders about the stability of operations.

The port operator added that it is closely monitoring developments and coordinating with the Ministry of



Transport and Road Safety in Israel. According to the company, the port is functioning strictly in line with the instructions and guidelines issued by the authorities.

The port continues to monitor the situation and is coordinating closely with the Ministry of Transport and Road Safety and operating as per their instructions, the statement noted.

APSEZ further reiterated its commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of its employees while maintaining uninterrupted operations. The company stressed that stable functioning of Haifa Port is crucial for Israel's supply chain and international trade

flows.

We remain committed to ensuring the safety of our people and the continuity of operations, maintaining stability for Israel's supply chain and international trade, the company said.

The clarification comes amid heightened tensions in the region following recent US and Israeli attacks on Iran and subsequent retaliatory actions. APSEZ's statement seeks to reassure investors, partners, and customers that there has been no damage to infrastructure and that business activities at Haifa Port are continuing as usual despite the geopolitical situation.

US-Iran war could hit Bangladesh exports, macro stability

DHAKA

The US Iran war is likely to disrupt transportation of Bangladesh's exports to Europe and the US and affect the country's overall macroeconomic stability, a report has said.

The report from The Daily Star said rising prices of imported petroleum products and liquefied natural gas (LNG) and disruptions to industrial raw material supply chains are likely if the con-



flict continues.

Bangladesh is always a victim of geo political tension as the country is an importing nation, Harun Ur Rashid, chairman of Bangla-

desh Container Shipping Association, was cited as saying.

Unstable energy price and supply would burden the balance of payments and foreign exchange reserves as the Middle East is the main import source for Bangladesh, the report cited another expert as saying.

Further the main shipping artery of goods-Suez Canal's proximity to Iran could hinder shipments to Europe and the US, especially garment

exports and long term conflict may discourage Middle Eastern labour markets from recruiting Bangladeshi workers, it detailed.

Any long term war in the Middle East will invariably have a bad impact on the oil price, transportation of the LPG and availability of the LPG in the international markets, the report cited Mohammed Amirul Haque, managing director of Delta LPG and president of the LPG Operators Association of

Bangladesh.

Mahmud Hasan Khan, president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, noted that a prolonged conflict could cause the budget of consumers to shrink leading to lesser spending on items such as garments.

Bangladesh exported goods worth \$10.9 million, mainly garments and pharmaceuticals, to Iran's \$65 billion market in FY25, the report noted.

Analysts have noted that even short term conflicts have outsized effects on prices and supply, citing past incidents in the Gulf during the 1980s Iran Iraq war.

The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) announced a new wave of attacks targeting US and Israeli military installations across the Middle East, to avenge the recent US-Israeli strikes on Iran that reportedly killed Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Scindia to inaugurate 'Bharat Pavilion' in Barcelona

NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Communications Jyotiraditya M. Scindia is set to inaugurate the Bharat Pavilion at the prestigious Mobile World Congress 2026 in Barcelona from March 2 to March 5, 2026.

The Bharat Pavilion will serve as a global platform to showcase India's rapidly expanding telecom manufacturing capabilities and its vibrant innovation ecosystem, according to an official statement issued on Sunday.

The Minister's participation at MWC 2026, regarded as the world's largest and most influential technology and telecommunications gathering, underscores India's growing stature as a global leader in the digital and mobile ecosystem. During the event, Scindia will also unveil the curtain raiser for India Mobile Congress 2026, highlighting India's flagship digital technology forum that brings together policymakers, industry leaders, and technology ex-



perts from across the globe.

The visit is aimed at deepening international partnerships through strategic engagements with governments, global industry leaders, and technology innovators. The Ministry of Communications stated that the Minister's interactions will focus on attracting investments, fostering collaboration, and strengthening India's role in shaping secure, inclusive, and future-ready digital networks worldwide.

At the global platform, Scindia will deliver an address at the GSMA Ministerial Programme titled Built for What's Next, where world leaders will deliberate on future-ready digital infrastruc-

ture and emerging technology frameworks. He is also scheduled to deliver the closing keynote session, Breaking the Cost Barrier, which will focus on building affordable, inclusive, and scalable digital connectivity models for global adoption.

In addition to keynote sessions, the Minister will participate in a CEO dinner hosted by India and hold discussions with global business leaders. He will conduct focused booth visits and attend technology demonstrations by leading international and Indian companies. Notably, Scindia will visit the booth of Tejas Networks for the launch of the T31600-D3 Hyper-scalable DCI Platform, marking a significant milestone in India's advanced telecom product development.

The Ministry emphasized that the Minister's engagements at MWC 2026 reflect India's commitment to accelerating digital transformation and expanding its footprint in the global telecommunications landscape.

INFRA BOOST

Gujarat gets record Rs 17,366 cr railway allocation

AHMEDABAD

Gujarat has been allocated Rs 17,366 crore in this year's Union Budget for railway development, marking a sharp rise compared to previous years, Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Sunday.

Speaking after inaugurating the Gujarat Semiconnect Conference-2026 at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar, Vaishnaw said that under the leadership of Narendra Modi, railway infrastructure across India is undergoing rapid transformation. He stated that historic decisions taken by the

Central Government for the comprehensive development of railways in Gujarat have ushered in a new era of transportation and connectivity in the state.

The minister noted that during the UPA government between 2009 and 2014, Gujarat received only Rs 589 crore annually for railway projects. In comparison, the present government has allocated Rs 17,366 crore for Gujarat this year, which is a record-breaking budget, he said, adding that the manifold increase would significantly modernise the state's rail network and enhance passenger



amenities.

Vaishnaw further informed that railway projects worth Rs 1.28 lakh crore are currently under execution in Gujarat. Under the Amrit Station Scheme, 87 railway stations in the state have been selected for redevelopment as world-class facilities, of which 21 have already been completed. Rede-

velopment work is progressing at key stations including Ahmedabad, Sabarmati, Surat, Una and Somnath.

After redevelopment, Ahmedabad railway station will provide passengers with international-level facilities, he said.

Referring to India's first high-speed rail corridor between Mumbai and Ahmedabad, Vaishnaw said the Centre is preparing to operationalise the bullet train next year. Once completed, travel between Ahmedabad and Mumbai will take just one hour and 57 minutes at a speed of 350 kilometres per hour, he added.

Senior officials from Japan's Prime Minister's Office recently reviewed the progress of the project and expressed satisfaction.

The minister also stated that Prime Minister Modi has approved seven new high-speed rail routes to connect other cities in the future. He credited the cooperation of the Gujarat government under Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel for helping projects advance faster than scheduled timelines, emphasising that modern railways and high-speed connectivity would significantly strengthen the state's transport infrastructure.

Inter Tighten Grip on Serie A after Champions League Exit

Dimarco strike and Calhanoglu penalty seal crucial Genoa victory

MILAN

Inter Milan resumed their relentless march towards the Serie A title with a composed 2-0 win over Genoa, bouncing back emphatically from their midweek Champions League elimination.

Goals from Federico Dimarco and Hakan Calhanoglu extended Inter's lead at the top to 13 points over city rivals AC Milan, putting the Nerazzurri firmly in control of the Scudetto race.

Inter's domestic dominance has been striking. They have dropped just two points in

their last 15 league matches and look a class apart in Italy's top flight. The victory, however, came against the backdrop of a humbling 5-2 aggregate defeat to Norwegian side FK Bodo/Glimt in the Champions League — a result that raised uncomfort-

able questions about both coach Cristian Chivu's squad and the broader strength of Italian football.

There was little sign of lingering doubt in the first half as Dimarco produced a moment of brilliance in the 32nd minute. The Italy international exchanged passes with Henrik Mkhitaryan before unleashing a stunning first-time volley from a tight angle.

The game drifted thereafter until Alex Amorim handled a cross from Luis Henrique inside the area. Calhanoglu, returning from muscle problems, calmly converted

the resulting penalty to secure the points.

Elsewhere, Romelu Lukaku scored his first goal of the season with a dramatic last-gasp winner as SSC Napoli edged Verona 2-1 to stay in the hunt for Champions League qualification. Napoli, however, remain 14 points behind Inter, effectively ending their title defence.

With the Milan derby looming next weekend, Inter's fans are already celebrating. Barring a dramatic collapse, the Scudetto appears destined for the blue-and-black half of Milan.

Guardiola Plays Down Haaland Injury after Narrow Leeds Victory

MANCHESTER

Pep Guardiola expects Erling Haaland to be sidelined only briefly after the striker missed Manchester City's crucial 1-0 win over Leeds United in the Premier League.

Haaland was a surprise absentee at Elland Road following a minor knock sustained in training on Thursday. However, Guardiola insisted the injury is "not a big issue" and expressed hope the Norwegian forward will return soon.

City coped well without their prolific scorer as Antoine Semenyo's first-half strike secured a fourth consecutive league victory. The result leaves the defending champions just two points behind leaders Arsenal, who face Chelsea on Sunday.

"We don't have spies in the training centre to deliver the info to our media. I think it is not a big issue. We will see," Guardiola said when asked about Haaland's condition. Pressed further on a timeline,

he added: "I don't know. I wish he comes back."

Despite boasting a marginally better winning ratio without Haaland this season, City had to dig deep in a hostile atmosphere at Elland Road. Semenyo's close-range finish followed slick build-up play involving Rayan Cherki and Rayan Ait-Nouri, both part of Guardiola's squad rebuild over the past 18 months.

"Complete game, in a tough place, and 10 games left. Time to be decisive," Guardiola said, praising his team's

mindset and commitment as the title race intensifies.

City's fate remains in their own hands, with 10 wins from their remaining fixtures guaranteeing the trophy regardless of Arsenal's results. However, Guardiola was cautious about title talk, stressing the importance of securing Champions League qualification — a competition City have featured in consistently for over a decade.

"One game at a time," he said. "The Premier League is better than ever."

PSG Stretch Ligue 1 Lead with Narrow Win at Le Havre



LE HAVRE

Paris Saint-Germain extended their advantage at the top of Ligue 1 to four points with a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Le Havre AC on Saturday, courtesy of a first-half strike from Bradley Barcola.

PSG capitalised on slip-ups by second-placed RC Lens, who have endured a difficult week following a 3-2 home defeat to AS Monaco and a 1-1 draw at RC Strasbourg Alsace on Friday.

Luis Enrique's side have now recorded nine wins from their last 10 league outings, underlining their consistency in the title race. However, the breakthrough at Stade Oceane did not arrive until the 37th minute. Deployed in an unfamiliar central role, Barcola rose to head home a precise cross from Lee Kang-in, giving the visitors a deserved lead.

PSG nearly doubled their advantage shortly afterwards when Lee spurned a clear op-

portunity, while new signing Dro Fernandez saw his effort ruled out for offside moments later.

Le Havre offered little attacking threat for much of the contest but nearly snatched an equaliser early in the second half. Issa Soumare's sharp turn and shot in the 54th minute forced PSG goalkeeper Matvey Safonov into an alert save.

The visitors had a golden opportunity to seal the points in the 79th minute after Desire Doue was brought down by Lucas Gourna-Douath inside the area. However, Doue's penalty was denied by Le Havre keeper Morry Diaw, keeping the hosts in contention until the final whistle.

Despite the narrow margin, PSG's defensive discipline ensured they secured all three points. Le Havre remain 13th, nine points clear of the relegation zone, while PSG strengthened their grip on the Ligue 1 summit as the season heads into its decisive phase.

Harry Kane Targets Lewandowski Record after Brace in Dortmund Thriller

DORTMUND

Harry Kane believes he is perfectly placed to challenge Robert Lewandowski's single-season Bundesliga scoring record after scoring twice in Bayern Munich's thrilling 3-2 win over Borussia Dortmund.

The England captain netted from open play and added a composed penalty as Bayern came from behind, ending Dortmund's slim title hopes. It was Kane's fourth straight league match with a brace, lifting his Bundesliga tally to 30 goals this season.

With 10 games remaining, Kane is 11 goals short of Lewandowski's record of 41, set in 2020-21. That campaign saw Lewandowski eclipse Gerd Müller's long-standing mark of 40 goals from 1971-

72 — once considered untouchable.

"I'm in a good moment. I've got to keep doing what I'm doing," Kane told Sky Germany. "There's still a lot of games to play. I need to stay consistent. We'll see come late April or May if it's possible."

The 32-year-old has 45 goals in all competitions — already a career-best return. His movement, finishing and leadership have transformed Bayern's attack this season, making him the focal point of their domestic and European ambitions. Bayern's win stretched their Bundesliga lead to 11 points, but Kane urged focus: "It's not over. We've seen how quickly things can change."

For now, though, the record chase continues to gather momentum with every passing match.



REAL MADRID, MAN CITY SET FOR BLOCKBUSTER CHAMPIONS LEAGUE LAST-16 CLASH

NYON, SWITZERLAND

European heavyweights Real Madrid CF and Manchester City F.C. will once again collide in the UEFA Champions League knockout rounds after being drawn together in the last 16. The tie marks the sixth meeting between the two sides in the knockout phase since the 2019-20 season, underlining what has become one of modern football's fiercest rivalries. The teams have already faced each other earlier this campaign, with City staging a comeback to defeat the 15-time European champions 2-1 in December's group-stage encounter.

City's director of football, Hugo Viana, welcomed the heavyweight showdown. "We played against each other already in the group phase, so it'll be a really nice game to watch. It's like a final, we are happy to go there again," he told UEFA.

Defending champions Paris Saint-Germain F.C. will take on Chelsea F.C. in a repeat of last year's fiery Club World Cup final. Chelsea director David Barnard said the clash "holds no fear" despite PSG's status as reigning champions.

Premier League leaders Arsenal F.C. avoided the biggest names after topping the league phase with eight wins and will face Bayer 04 Leverkusen. Should they advance, Arsenal will meet either Sporting or Bodo/Glimt in the quarter-finals.

Elsewhere, FC Bayern Munich were paired with Atalanta, while FC Barcelona will face Newcastle United. Liverpool take on Galatasaray, and Tottenham Hotspur meet Atletico Madrid.

The last-16 ties will be played on March 10-11 and March 17-18, with the final scheduled for May 30 at Puskás Aréna.

With several powerhouses stacked on one side of the draw, the road to Budapest promises high drama and another chapter in the Real Madrid-Manchester City saga.



Jayasuriya Mulls Sri Lanka Exit after T20 World Cup Disappointment

PALLEKELE

Sanath Jayasuriya has hinted he could step down as Sri Lanka head coach following the team's underwhelming campaign at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026, though he has yet to make a final decision.

Speaking after Sri Lanka's narrow five-run defeat to Pakistan national cricket team, Jayasuriya admitted he was disappointed with how the tournament ended. His current contract with Sri Lanka Cricket runs until June 2026, and discussions over his future are expected in the coming weeks.

"I thought I should give that title to someone else," Jayasuriya said, referencing earlier comments during the England series where he suggested he had no long-term plans to remain in the role. "My contract ends in June. I have not given my official decision yet. I need to discuss with them what comes next."

Sri Lanka's campaign showed early promise but ultimately faltered. After progressing from the group stage despite a shock loss to Zimbabwe, they failed to maintain momentum in the Super 8 phase. Consecutive defeats to England, New Zealand and Pakistan ended their semi-

final hopes. The loss to Pakistan proved especially painful, as Sri Lanka fell just short while chasing 213 despite an unbeaten 76 from captain Dasun Shanaka.

The early exit marked the fifth straight T20 World Cup in which the 2014 champions have failed to reach the semi-finals.

Jayasuriya, who took charge in mid-2024, oversaw notable successes in other formats, including a historic ODI series win over India and a Test triumph at The Oval. Across 76 matches under his tenure, Sri Lanka won 34, reflecting gradual progress despite struggles in T20 cricket.

With Sri Lanka Cricket reportedly exploring potential foreign candidates, Jayasuriya's future now hinges on upcoming discussions.



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Medvedev Claims Dubai Title after Griekspoor Withdraws Injured

DUBAI

Daniil Medvedev was crowned champion of the Dubai Tennis Championships after opponent Tallon Griekspoor withdrew from the final due to injury, tournament organisers confirmed. The Russian, a former world number one, secured the title via walkover after Griekspoor was unable to recover from a hamstring problem sustained during his semi-final clash. Medvedev had been in impressive form throughout the tournament, reaching the final without dropping a set.

Griekspoor revealed after his straight-sets victory over Andrey Rublev in the semi-finals that he had been struggling physically. The Dutchman admitted he would have been forced to retire had the match extended further, casting doubt over his ability to compete in the final. Medvedev had booked his place in the title clash by defeating Felix Auger-Aliassime in the last four, keeping alive hopes of a second Dubai crown. His dominant run in the tournament underlined a return to top form as he continues to rebuild momentum on the ATP Tour.

Despite lifting the trophy, Medvedev expressed sympathy for his

opponent. "Not how I want to win a final. Hoping the injury for Griekspoor is not too bad and wishing him a speedy recovery," he wrote on X.

The walkover marked a disappointing end to what had been a breakthrough week for Griekspoor, who impressed with resilient performances en route to the final. However, the physical toll of consecutive high-intensity matches ultimately proved too much.

For Medvedev, the title adds another prestigious hard-court trophy to his collection and provides a timely confidence boost as the season gathers pace. While he would have preferred to claim the crown on court, the Russian will nonetheless take encouragement from an unbeaten run in Dubai as he targets further success in the months ahead.

